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Mobile Beat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE

ISSUE 119 JANUARY 2009

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INTO REALITY

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Publisher
Ryan Burger - ProDJ Publishing
Editor in Chief and Managing Editor
Dan Walsh

Advertising Director
Andy "Cubbie" Powell

Art Director, Production
Adam M. Rothberg

Editor at Large
Anthony Barthel

Circulation Manager
Kitty Harr

Gear Guide Coordinator
Jake Feldman

Contributors to this issue:

Michael Edwards • Jay Maxwell • Mike Ficher • Stu Chisholm • Paul Kida
Rachel Friedman • DJ Dr. Drax • Marc Andrews • Ed Mullen • Rob Johnson
Nunzio De Pasquale • Eric Godfrey • Jay Conrad Levinson • John Stiernberg
DJ G. Brown • Steve Moody • Andy Ebon • Paul Kida, The DJ Coach
Marti DeBergi • J. Richard Roberts • Thomas Edison

Mobile Beat Mobile Entertainer Shows
and Conferences Producer
Michael Buonaccorso

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Resolve, Don't Dissolve

Wow. The nation is making quite an interesting entrance into 2009, isn't it? We are all concerned about the state of the economy, many are elated as a new president is taking office, and we wonder what the year will hold—and especially how it will affect our entertainment businesses.

It is an interesting coincidence that the two main themes of this issue—planning for the future, and the idea of the “DJ emergency kit”—were both brainstormed long before the current situation developed. Blind luck or part of a bigger plan? Who knows; as an editor I just say “thank you” and get back to work.

Inside is an arsenal full of articles we hope you can use as you set out on your journey through this potentially dangerous year. You'll see that we certainly do not come at it from the gloom and doom point of view, but with positive and practical material, such as: how to make “resolutions” that are really action plans to meet concrete goals, not pipe dreams that fade as time goes on (that's with The DJ Coach, Paul Kida); useful tips on “recession-proofing” with Dr. Drax, on branding with John Stiernberg, on building your wedding business this year (yes, I said building!) with Andy Ebon, and much, much more.

(Brief side note: While I know that many of you have experienced cancellations and a falling off of the number of new bookings in the wake of the economic crisis, consider one DJ I know. A multi-system operator, he told me he has actually seen an increase in bookings for 2009. He chalks it up to being good enough to be recommended highly by all the banquet halls and other facilities at which he and his DJs play. One thing this says to me is, be careful not to let the stormy economic climate become an excuse for not being the best you can be. Just keep on keeping on.)

We have some good advice on “emergency” preparedness that will help you meet the challenge of the coming year with more confidence, including: essential songs and music styles you should never be without, courtesy of our resident musicologist, Jay Maxwell; the “small stuff” that can make a huge difference when it comes to gear and other technology, according to Stu Chisholm; plus, more ideas for business and personal financial peace to round out the “ultimate DJ emergency kit.”

As we gaze out into an uncertain future, I think there are a few things worth remembering. First, to quote a certain famous dead rock star, “The future's uncertain and end is always near.” Which to me is a reminder that even when the sun is shining and “all is well with the world,” anything can happen. So, it's good to be prepared as best we can for a wide range of possibilities. But there's another line from that song (forgive me for ripping the lines out of their context; Jim Morrison had a way of saying a lot more than it seemed he was on the surface) that captures the attitude I think we should have for this year's guaranteed winding, bumpy ride: “Keep your eyes on the road, your hands upon the wheel.” Don't just drive “defensively” but look ahead as far as you can, and plan for impending...success. **MB**

— Dan Walsh, Editor in Chief



WORDS OF THANKS

I wanted to give MB praise as I was proud to do once at a local DJ [industry] event in NJ, when the question was asked to the audience, “Who was the most influential contributor to your DJ success?” Most responded with mentors or idols that have been influential to them.

I thought about it...and when called on, I said that though there are and have been many, since I started my biz in 1991—just about when MB started—in actuality, NO SINGLE event or person has been as supportive and educationally contributing as *Mobile Beat*...I feel having MB is as important as having today's top hits. I was introduced to the magazine almost from its inception (not to mention that I have every single issue ever printed...)

So please allow me to say personally that *Mobile Beat* is my first line of defense and I so look forward to every issue. To all at MB, thank you for a great product. —Tom Catucci, DancinMachineDJ.Com, Lyndhurst, NJ

Tom, all of us here at *Mobile Beat* thank YOU for your support through the years and your public acknowledgement of what the mag means to you and your DJ career. May we all keep on improving our profession together! —The Editor and Staff

RANT IN RESPONSE TO LYRICAL RAUNCH

Disgusting by anyone's standards! That's what I think about some of today's song lyrics. Who am I? Just your average Joe the Plumber-type professional DJ. (Warning: If you are sensitive to discussions of obscenity, then you should move on to the next article.)

Every generation has had its own signature music that some people have found objectionable. But I can't remember a time, until now, that songs had to have “clean” versions just to be played on the radio!

And sometimes even “clean” versions aren't clean enough. Recently I was DJing at a middle school Halloween dance. In our area, besides the “Cha Cha Slide,” one of the most popular songs is “Crank Dat” by Soulja Boy. After getting several requests from some of the older students, I played it—against my better judgment. Most of the audience was unaware of what the song's lyrics allegedly mean, including the school's female coach who brought several kids up to the DJ stand to show everyone their dance moves. Everyone was oblivious to the lyrics except one adult. But that was all it took. Yes, I got busted big time!

I knew about that the song's hidden meanings, but I chose not to know what they were...because I dig the song, kids love it (its music video has over 40 million hits on YouTube to date) and the “Crank Dat” dance is fun to do and watch. However, faster than a speeding bullet that parent e-mailed me with what the phrase “Superman dat ho” from the song lyrics means, according to the online Urban Dictionary. He offered several definitions and suffice to say they all were unbelievably disgusting. Some comments on internet blogs were more descriptive: “nasty, vulgar, and offensive.” It just blows my mind how someone could even think up some of the reported meanings, all of which involve degrading women. The concerned parent had every right to tell me: “The values expressed by this song are not those we want to encourage in our kids.” I apologized profusely to him and promised to never again play that song to anyone, ever! We all have a choice of what we play, and yes I am singling out Soulja Boy because of this particular incident, but there are plenty of other artists with songs that demean women.

I've often wondered who exactly I can play songs with questionable lyrics for. Children shouldn't be exposed to them and most adults don't want to hear them. That leaves high school and college students, but that can't be a good thing either. So who exactly does that leave?

On my DJ contract I have a place for my clients to fill out songs that they don't want me to play. I explain to my brides and grooms that I include that because I don't want to play a song that might remind them of a past love. But almost ninety-nine percent of the time they put rap music down as an overall kind of music that they don't want to hear. My guess is that these people equate rap with offensive lyrics—and that has to be a first for a particular category of music.

I once did a wedding where the bride and groom wanted lots of songs with PG lyrics. The groom wanted a song called “Pimp” for the garter re-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 80

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...the latest addition to our family of MSR-Series powered speakers, delivers the ideal blend of power, performance, features, and portability. A newly designed Class D digital amplifier delivers 200W of clean, dynamic power via a high-performance 10-inch cone woofer and 1-inch titanium-dome compression driver that match up perfectly for smooth, uncolored response from 55Hz to 20kHz. The big surprise is how lightweight and easy to handle a great sounding loudspeaker can be. And the price! See what we mean at your favorite Yamaha Live Sound dealer.



(Back panel shown)

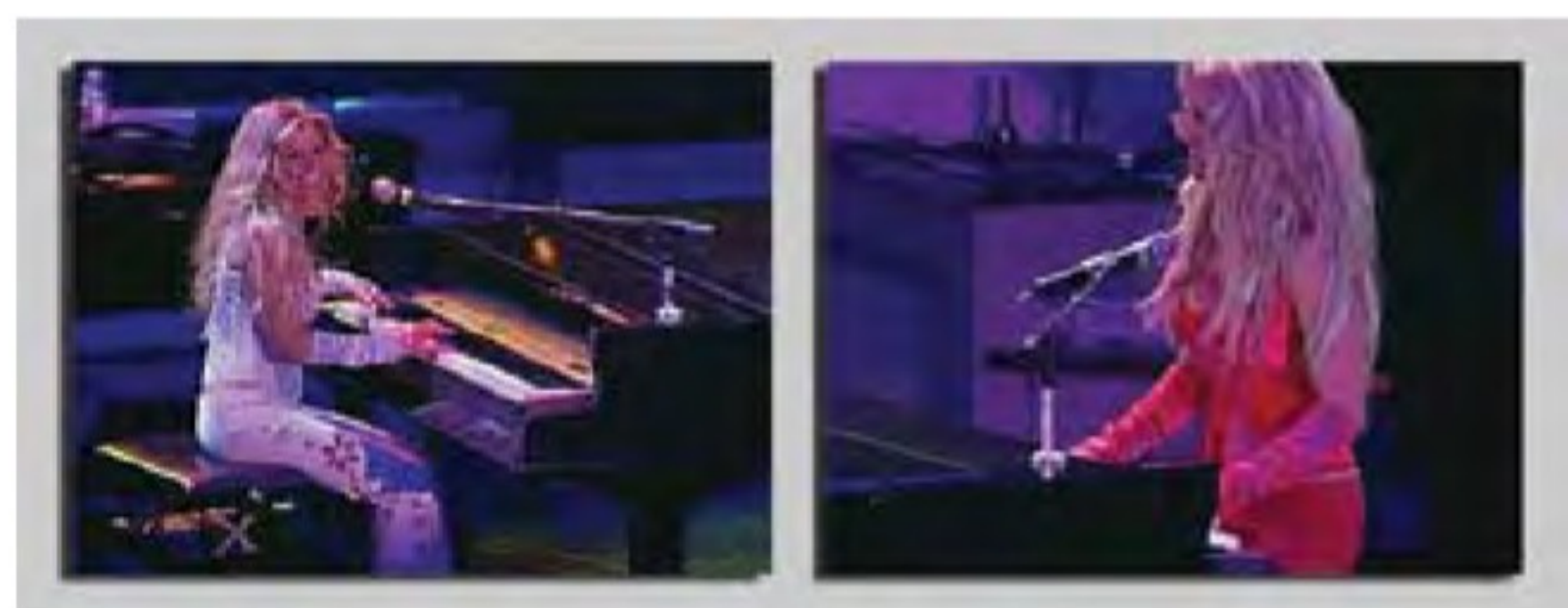
For extra input flexibility, the MSR250 features dual input channels, each with its own low and high EQ controls and level control. The signals from the two inputs can be mixed through the MSR250s, as well as the rear-panel output connector, allowing convenient linking to other speakers or audio devices for easy system expansion.



MBLV.09 Events Unveiled

Welcome...to a Beautiful Musical Duel

The opening night Welcome Party at MBLV.09 will feature a duel. No not with guns...with pianos! And these dual pianos will be played skillfully by a unique musical duo. The Twins Dueling Pianos Show is the only all-female and identical twin dueling pianos show in the world. Kimberley and Tamara Pinegar take the stage and have the audience laughing and singing along in no time. In keeping with the tradition of the dueling pianos genre, the show is an all-request sing-along that incorporates a great deal of audience participation and comedy. The Twins play requests that range from the Andrews Sisters to Aerosmith and AC/DC! It's a duel you don't want to miss! And it's part of MBLV.09, Monday night, February 16, at the Top of the Riv. Doors open at 6 PM...See you there!



Sensational System Giveaway

The grand finale to the tradeshow portion of MBLV09 will include a power-packed collection of gear that might help you expand your DJ service overnight. Don't miss being at the show to get your chance to win the following:

American DJ Lighting Package

L is for LED and Laser, for ADJ's contribution to this year's giveaway. They'll be providing two Vertigo TRI LEDs, two Revo Sweeps, one Mega Bar Pro, one Tri Phase and one Galaxian.



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The revolutionary all-in-one DJ workstation featuring a high performance four-channel VCA mixer and two scratching CD/MP3 players. Built for the working DJ in mind, for top sound quality and ease of setup.



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Promo Only - 1 Year CD and 1 Year DVD Subscriptions

Promo Only is a premier music and music video source for DJs and other music professionals. Their programmers help you stay ahead of the curve with music and video subscriptions that give you access to a wide range of formats, from hip-hop to country music; from Latin music videos Club Mix Videos...just to name a few.



ADJA Membership

Great gear doesn't necessarily guarantee success, so this super collection will be augmented with a complimentary membership in the American Disc Jockey Association, the largest and fastest growing trade association for mobile DJs. The ADJA's #1 goal is to "...help DJs build and grow their business," and they do that by providing exceptional services and benefits.



All these and many other individual prizes will be given away during the Sensational System Giveaway, on the MBLV.09 exhibit floor around 5 PM on Thursday, at the close of the show. Don't miss your chance to check out these and other products at the exhibitors' booths on Wednesday and Thursday, then stick around for the grand finale. You just might go home a BIG winner. For more information on the show go to www.mobilebeat.com.

DJ Turns Rock Star for a Week

The winner of the "Get Treated Like a Rockstar" promotion for MBLV.09 is Steve Walsh of Advanced DJ Service in Wichita, Kansas. This lucky DJ will get his rooms comped and upgraded, a complimentary conference pass, tickets to the Riviera's highly regarded Ice Show, and a dinner for two at the hotel's Ristorante Italiano. It's a total value of more than \$1,000, designed to make a DJ feel like a rock star during the trade show.

Steve is a founding member of the Kansas Chapter of the ADJA, which is once again bringing out a large contingent of DJ professionals to MBLV09. He runs one of the largest multi-operations in the state and does tons of weddings, plus offers video dance parties, karaoke, and much more. He has been featured on TLC's Wedding Specials and has been opart of the cruise industry's DJs at Sea program.

He says, "I am a regular attendee of the Mobile Beat shows because the exposure to new equipment is invaluable and the education is top-notch." The Mobile Beat show management team is happy to award this fortunate DJ with the star treatment during the 2009 Vegas event!



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The **PRODIGY**_{FX} was designed to revolutionize the DJ industry. We knew we created something special and were excited by the overwhelming success that followed - including over 10,000 units sold and numerous award nominations. Since its introduction in 2007, our customers have been asking us for a more cost effective, yet professional system to serve the working DJ, who does not need all of the advanced features. We listened!



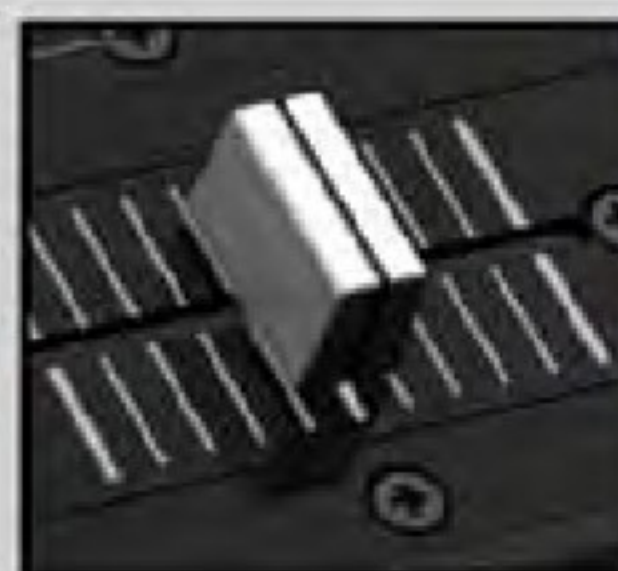
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B-52



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"Start" Makeover Means Mega Prizes for Online DJs

Start.ProDJ.Com recently celebrated its grand "re-opening" after going through a process of remodeling and technology improvement. The festivities included a three-week long prize giveaway, featuring some great DJ products. Each week ProDJ management looked at randomly numbered posts from the Start.ProDJ.Com forums of the previous week. If a post was deemed of value as a positive contribution to the discussion at hand, the writer became the winner of the great prizes listed below. The idea was to reward online DJ community members for the great content that they add to the site on a daily basis.

2

Week #2 was sponsored by DJS Pro Audio and Lighting (www.djsupply.com). The grand prize went to Steve Lynch—an awesome lighting system from DJS including: Irradiant DMX Wireless SRC-260, Irradiant Club 12 SRC 145 controller, 2 ADJ LED Spectrums, Chauvet DJ Squeeze II, 4 Accucable AC3PDMX10, Eliminator Tri-33 Stand, Eliminator Fog it fogger, Ariba AC-140, Arriba AC-125, Rosco 1 gallon of Clear Fog Fluid, and a Martin \$25 dollar gift certificate good towards any Martin fixture.



Runner-up DJ Teddy Bear has won a prize package from Promo Only, including one 3-month DVD subscription (\$150 value), one 3-month CD subscription (\$50 value), and one specialty disc (\$40 value). More information on Promo Only's service options can be found at www.promoonly.com.



3

TM Studios/PrimeCuts sponsored the Week #3 contest, with the grand prize going to Infinity Entertainment. This package included a 1-year subscription to the PrimeCuts service—a total value of \$1000, with the winner receiving 84 CDs by the end of the 12-months. The PrimeCuts package included PrimeCuts, PrimeCuts Latin and PrimeCuts Smooth Jazz. For more information on PrimeCuts go to www.tmstudios.com/primecuts-more.asp.

Runners-up DJSean102 and RhinoRider will both enjoy a one-year DJ Intelligence account with free customization, including enhanced Outside The Box forms, timelines, and checklists.

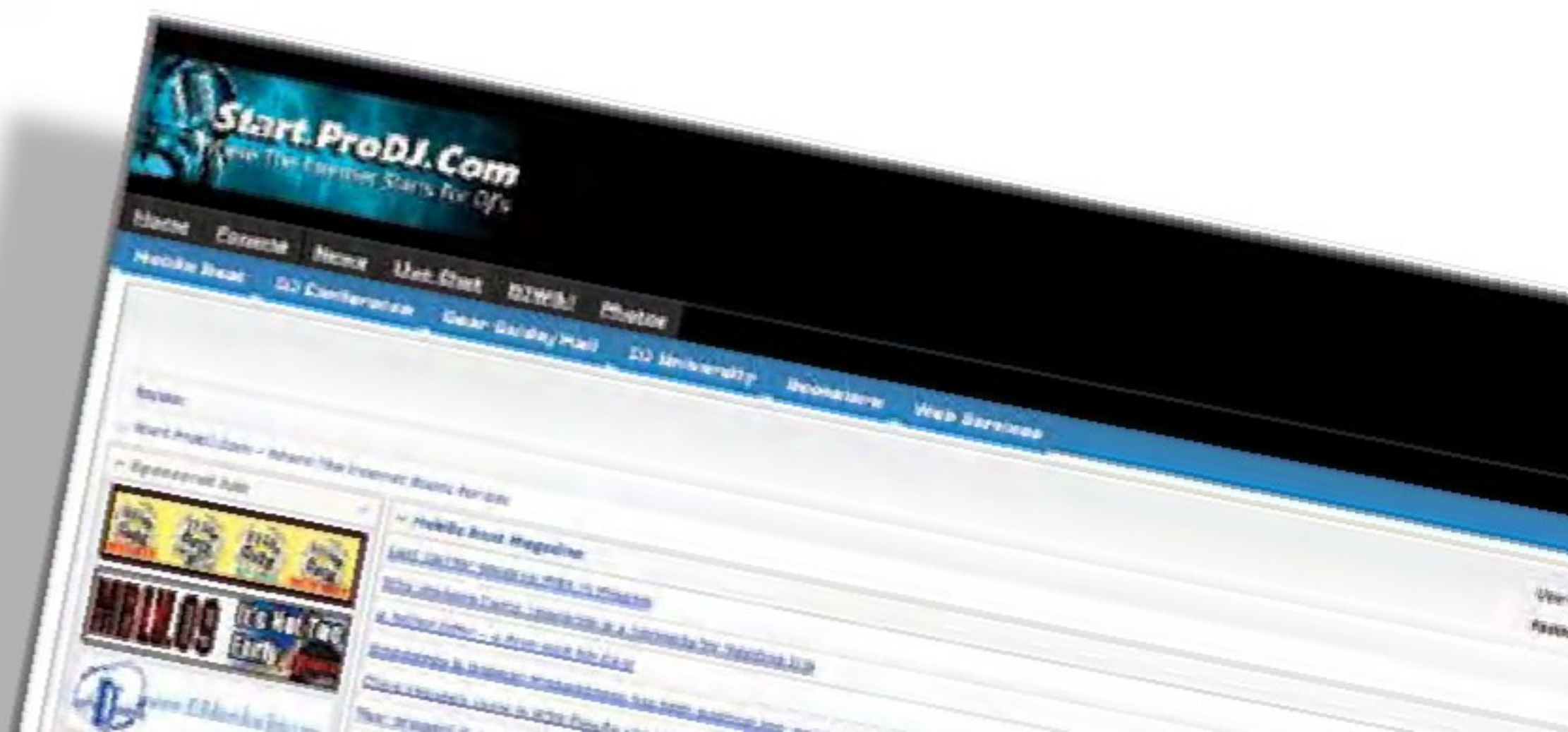


1

The Week #1 contest was sponsored by Hercules. Grand prize winners DJ Brick and DJ Taz both won a package featuring the DJ Console RMX DJ Controller and the Mobile DJ MP3 Wireless DJ Mixing Controller, both from Hercules. (For more on these products go to www.hercules.com.)



Runners-up DJ Steve Z and OsborneDJ won one year of the DJ Intelligence online DJ management service, "Private Label" edition, with free customization and the Outside The Box enhanced forms from DJ Intelligence and OutsidtheBox.Biz, a value of \$225. (Go to www.djintelligence.com for more about this cutting-edge web service.)



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- 3x 3-Pin XLR linking cables



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- Power Consumption: 13W

NEW



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- 34 Multi Color Beams
- Power Consumption: 13W



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American DJ's revolutionary "TRI Series"
LED technology uses 3-in-1 RGB LEDs that
create 7 different colors: Red, Green,
Blue, Purple, Yellow, Cyan, & White



CAMO MICS READY FOR ACTION

In order to kick off the New Year in style, Audix has launched a Series of Designer Microphones. The first of the models to hit the market is the Limited Edition Camo Series which is available in five styles: Winter Camo, Desert Camo, Jungle Camo, Forest Camo and Pink Camo. The Pink Camo has already been spotted on the Hannah Montana television show in the hands of Miley Cyrus. The designs will be available for microphone models OM2 and i-5 and will be shipping in January 2009.

"The Camo design idea has been in the works for some time now and has finally been perfected!" said Cliff Castle, Vice President of sales at Audix. "It's a totally new finish technique that results in not only a great looking graphic, but also a durable one. It's a great way to start off the New Year as well as a fitting tribute to our military and people in service." www.audixusa.com.



HED: LED-POWERED UFO SIGHTED

American DJ has taken spinning saucer effects into the LED dimension with its new Accu UFO intelligent moving head. Like traditional club/DJ flying saucer effects, the Accu UFO is a rotating disc that spews out dozens of multi-color beams from lenses around its perimeter. But instead of being powered by a typical halogen lamp, it's equipped with 32 8mm red, green, blue and white LEDs that consume a fraction of the energy, have a much longer 50,000-hour lamp life, and produce razor-sharp beams with or without fog—making it not only a technologically advanced fixture, but an earth-friendly one, too.

The Accu UFO is a great centerpiece for clubs and discos, as well as an exciting mobile DJ effect. As its saucer-shaped disc spins, the entire moving head rotates up to 540° pan/ 265° tilt at 8 or 16-bit resolution. The result is dramatic, projecting 32 bright, sharp LED beams that twist, turn, spin and rotate over a wide area. And with easy-to-operate onboard strobe and pulse effects, you can add even more flash and splash at the flick of a switch.

The unit features 10 DMX channels for controlling: pan, 16-bit pan, tilt, 16-bit tilt, pan/tilt speed, lens rotation, LED colors, chase speed and strobing. It can also be run without a controller in Sound Active mode; just turn it on, and it will



chase to the music via 7 eye-popping built-in programs. Multiple units can also be linked together Master-Slave for a very large, spectacular in-sync light show. The Accu UFO features 4 red, 4 green, 4 blue and 4 white LEDs, which project at a 40° beam angle and utilize special condenser lenses for added output and brightness. The fixture also includes: high-quality stepper motors for smooth microstepping; a bright 4-button control panel; and a convenient Smart Sense feature that allows it to instantly recognize whether it is in DMX or Master-Slave mode. Measuring 16.75"L x 18"W x 14.25"H, the Accu UFO is very lightweight for a fixture of its movement and output, weighing just 27 lbs. To see the Accu UFO in action go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnUMCzH2eLc. www.americandj.com

HIGH FASHION FOR YOUR SUPPORT TEAM

DJ Skirts introduces Glow Skirts, a new line of products that will surely boost any DJ's "pro-status" to a whole new level. These elegant, white versions of DJ Skirts traditional black products are designed to work with today's new "up-lighting" LED technology. The lively LED lights flash to the beat of the music, creating an exhilarating, energetic show. When the room lights go down, and the dancing music begins, the special combination of two different fabrics sewn together are enhanced by the LED lighting effects. Glow Skirts genuinely add a new dimension and "wow factor" to your support systems.

Glow Skirts products are made by DJ Skirts using Chauvet LEDs, much like a Mazda made with a Ford engine. Lighting is a component of the product, and therefore is sold as part of the overall package. However, Glow Skirts can also be purchased separately at a lower price, without the lighting effects included. The Chauvet LED models included will vary, depending on which Glow Skirts product or size is purchased. Glow Skirts are available in Box Truss Sleeve, Curtain Rod System, Mobile ProBooth, Table Jacket, Tripod Skirts, and Valance Rod System. Detailed info can be found at the company website, along with 30-second video clips displaying these products.

Made in the USA, DJ Skirts has a reputation and history of making every effort to provide high quality, long-lasting products. It's not uncommon to hear customers talk about using products they purchased nearly 10 years ago. It is important to note that all DJ Skirts fabrics are fire retardant, pass the NFPA 701 fire code test, and will be safe in any venue that may require this by law. www.djskirts.com



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Maintaining a Sound Connection

Echo Digital Audio's new Indigo DJx helps laptop jocks change with the times

By Stu Chisholm

Due to my well-publicized transformation from a CD to "digital DJ," I often find myself on the phone with another entertainer asking for my "expert" advice. An odd state of affairs, since that said transformation only happened at the tail end of 2006. I also prefer USB media controllers to computers, yet this also doesn't deter anyone either. Maybe it's because real tech support costs money...and talking to me is free? Hmm...

THE OLD AND NEW BLUE

Anyway, one of the most frequent questions I'm asked is, "How can I hook my computer up to my mixer?" Programs like PCDJ, Virtual DJ, DJ Power and others have amazing features, and some have program-specific hardware to control them without the traditional mouse and keyboard. Yet how to get the music from the computer (usually a laptop) to the mixer or amp gets overlooked more often than not.

Echo Digital Audio recognized this problem early on. They created the DJ-specific Indigo DJ sound card that fit into a notebook's PCMCIA slot, offering digital DJs superior 24-bit sound quality as compared to the standard onboard sound card, and multiple outputs for mixing/cueing to make the integration of a laptop into their rig a snap. Laptop DJs far and wide praised the little card's performance. One of them was my friend Paul Taylor who owns and operates Sunshine Entertainment in Detroit Michigan.

For better or worse, technology marches on. Laptop computers become increasingly more powerful, yet continue to shrink in size. As a result, the traditional PCMCIA slot is going the way of the floppy disk, being eliminated from the new computers in favor of the smaller, more efficient ExpressCard slot. Suddenly that good old Indigo DJ card is obsolete! Paul alerted me to this situation and, being the well informed, cutting-edge DJ that he is, also mentioned a new



version that would soon be available; the Indigo DJx. After all of those "how do I...?" calls I've had, I decided that this is something that DJs need to know about--ASAP! I contacted the company and soon had one of the cards, which hadn't been released yet, in my hands.

HOOKING UP

The first thing I noticed was how small the box is! Even though it holds the card, a six-foot cable and a software disc, the box itself is about the size of three stacked CD jewel cases. Inside is the card and cable, well protected in a plastic tray, with an instruction card and CD-ROM below. The disc contains drivers for Windows XP and Vista. (Note: Mac OSX support is in the works, should be available soon.)

The next thing I needed to do was score an ExpressCard slot-equipped laptop for testing, preferably one with DJ software and a music library on it. Once again, Paul came to the rescue with a new HP laptop equipped with Virtual DJ and a fairly decent music and video library to boot. After installing the drivers and console software, we were ready to put this new card through its paces.

This is when the first small shortcoming became apparent: As we went to hook the card up to my mixing console, we realized that the box contained a single 1/4" to RCA cable. If you want

INDIGO DJX - MSRP: \$229

www.echoaudio.com

Software Specs

Software console for metering and setting levels

Supports Windows XP/Vista (32-bit and 64-bit)

Macintosh OS X support coming soon

Supports pro audio and DJ software - WDM Kernel Streaming, ASIO, GSIF (32-bit only)

8 "Virtual Outputs" to run multiple applications at the same time

Low-latency drivers

your virtual decks to be on separate channels, like your old dual CD decks, then you're going to need two, obviously. Lucky for me, we found one in my massive drawer o' cables.

There is also another work-around, which apparently the Echo people thought would be the preferred method: set the DJ software to send both output channels to the same card output, but send the cue signals of both decks to the other. This way you'll use the mixing features included with your DJ software, and the second output of the DJx becomes your headphone/cue interface. This does have the added advantage of

Hot new book debuted at Mobile Beat Las Vegas this February

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Essential Info for Digital DJs

NEW TRAKTOR PRO ARRIVES IN STYLE

Based on years of software evolution, the latest Traktor generation—Traktor Pro—is now avail-

able and aims to offer superior creative workflow, an extremely functional user interface, powerful sound-shaping features, advanced syncing and control functions, and much more.

With four full-featured decks and extensive sound-shaping and MIDI-control options, Traktor Pro is ready to be complemented with the huge available range of DJ controllers on the market; the new Traktor Scratch Pro combines the full-featured Traktor Pro software with the Audio 8 DJ interface and a set of high-resolution timecode records and CDs for responsive hands-on control through turntables and CD decks.

Traktor Pro's MSRP is \$229, while Traktor Scratch Pro \$669. Go to www.listentopro.com for a fully functional demo.

TOTALLY NUMARK

Total Computer DJ in a Box is a package consisting of Numark's Total Control DJ controller, DJiO audio interface, HF125 DJ headphones and Native Instruments' Traktor 3 LE DJ software. DJs can mix and scratch on Total Control, the scratch control surface designed expressly for computer DJs. DJiO enables DJs to get audio into and out of their computer for connection to PA system and for cueing with the included professional-grade HF125 headphones. The system is compatible with Mac and PC computers.

Total Control is laid out just like a DJ mixer or CD player, with scratch wheels, line faders, EQ knobs and a crossfader. Learning on Total Control enables DJs to move to any other DJ system with ease. Thirty-one buttons, 20 knobs and five faders give DJs powerful control capability, while USB powering frees DJs from the tethering of a wall outlet. Total Control is compatible with most DJ software and comes with pre-mapped controls for Traktor LE with no programming needed.



DJiO is a compact, rugged computer interface that gets audio into and out of a DJ's computer on a USB connection. It has a microphone input, two sets of RCA outputs and a headphone output to handle all audio system connections. CD-grade, 24-bit, 44.1/88.2 kHz audio powered by ultra-low-latency ASIO drivers gives DJs the high-quality sound they expect from Numark.

HF125 DJ headphones feature seven-position adjustable earcups housing large 40mm mylar speaker drivers, a six-foot tangle-resistant cable and padding on the headband and earcups. Total Computer DJ in a box is now shipping to DJ and pro audio retailers. It carries a retail price of \$649.00. www.numark.com

VERSATILE ANALOG-TO-DIGITAL CONVERSION

American Audio has introduced the VersaPort, an easy-to-use universal audio interface that provides a powerful and affordable USB solution for using your CD players or turntables with your favorite DJ-ing software. The VersaPort is a 4 input channel / 4 output channel sound card with microphone and headphone level control that hooks up directly to your PC via its USB connec-



tion. A USB 1.1 compliant unit, this convenient little black box lets you connect your CD players or turntables to your computer and mixer all at the same time.

A generic interface, the VersaPort works with virtually all popular Windows and Macintosh audio production software programs, including: (Windows) MME, MS DirectSound, Steinberg ASIO and Audition; and (Mac) Garage Band, Audio Hijack Pro (OSX) and Sound Manager (OS9) – and many more. It delivers everything needed for most record/playback and interface applications. With the VersaPort's wizardry, you can do any number of things, such as drive your computer audio software with your CD or vinyl players, or record audio with your computer's built-in audio recorder.

The VersaPort includes a number of built-in extra features that contribute to its value and user-friendliness. It comes equipped with ASIO

drivers for easy, seamless plug-and-play operation, with no external adapters required. Another handy, unique feature is independent microphone and headphone volume level control, accessed via knobs on the top of the unit. Great for mobile use, the VersaPort is extremely compact and lightweight, measuring 4.72"L x 5.1"W x 1.57"H x 1.57"H, and weighing just 0.33 lbs. The MSRP of the VersaPort is \$179.95. www.americaaudio.us

only needing a single channel on your mixer. In fact, it would make the mixer obsolete, if it weren't for the need for mic inputs. For our tests, we chose the former method, which is how Paul had been running his old Indigo DJ card.

INDIGO ON THE ROAD

Paul and I had expected the new card to be just an updated version of the previous one, and that's what it is by and large. Playing with it just before our "test gig," though, what seemed at first to be another small glitch appeared: one channel seemed to be drastically over-modulated on certain tracks. It sounded as if the song had been recorded way too hot and was clipped. Putting the same track on the other deck solved the bad sound problem, but left us wondering why it sounded so bad on the first channel.

Seeking a better answer, I reached for the unit's one and only external control; the recessed volume knob, designed to allow you to adjust your headphone to a comfortable level when using the other mode. Dialing it down worked. Paul explained that he just ran his old card flat-out and it always sounded fine, but I suspect that the Echo folks may have made some improvements to the headphone preamp section so the card will work with a wider variety of headphones. Loading the same track on both decks and setting the volume so that they match was an easy fix for our little sound problem. (By the way, that the problem only happened with certain tracks, and was caused more by Paul's library not being well normalized. Something to consider when ripping!) The rest of the gig ran as smoothly as Paul's laid-back, New Orleans style is famous for.

A GOOD REPORT CARD

During the many hours I spent playing with the computer/card combo in the days after the gig, the DJx, the card performed flawlessly—even after being out in a freezing cold car and then in a hot laptop for hours on end. My final verdict: The Indigo DJx is a simple, straightforward device for a simple, straightforward job. I found myself wishing it was even a bit simpler, with maybe a bypass for the volume/headphone channel, but I understand the need to make it as versatile as possible, so that it can be used with nearly every mixing program and DJ preference imaginable. I found these small, personal issues easily ignored in the light of the low cost and ease of installation of the Indigo DJx. It is certainly the card I would use if I ever converted to laptop-based performance. The Indigo DJx should be available as you are reading this, so if you're as into "simple" as I am, you'll be able to simplify your DJ life immediately.

As always, if you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please feel free to e-mail me at DJStuCrew@gmail.com. Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**

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VEHICLE REVIEW

Taking U-Haul for a Spin

Testing out the rental concept

By Anthony B. Barthel

Over the summer, when gasoline had taken to skyrocketing in price, I thought it might be a good idea to downsize my vehicle and use a rented truck when a larger performance graced my calendar. With this in mind, I thought I'd rent a U-Haul truck for one event to judge the overall experience.

U-HAUL OR NOT U-HAUL—THAT IS THE QUESTION

First, a little more about my thinking on this subject. I had seen plenty of full-size vans zip-ping around with big advertisements on the side blaring out the fact that it only cost \$19.95 to rent the van for a day. But by doing a bit of false mathematics in my head, I figured that a smaller and more generally appealing vehicle would save me money in gasoline and be more environmentally friendly to boot. I might also gain more driving pleasure from, say, a Chevrolet HHR with a turbo, than with a full-size pickup truck.

Plus, a new HHR could have my company's imagery on the side and be a good advertisement. Heck, throw in the fact that some of them run on ethanol blend and I could tell the world that I was a "green DJ." Good PR, a more enjoyable driving experience and a new vehicle. Hmmm.

But then there are those performances where you bring everything you have, plus rented stuff, plus all the stuff you can beg from your friends. No compact crossover whatchamajigger SUV is going to haul all that stuff unless you get a trailer, and most larger hotels in my area don't have a provision to park such a beast. Thus, the rental van idea.



...but then there are those performances where you bring everything you have, plus rented stuff, plus all the stuff you can beg from your friends.

THE RENTAL EXPERIENCE

As I stepped up to the counter at my local U-Haul office, I had the same unpleasant sensation one gets when in line as a customer at the DMV. There was lousy music blaring on a radio that wasn't tuned properly and the "lady" behind the counter was very interested in whatever her friend on the cell phone had to say, but had no interest in the guy who was about to help to pay her salary. These days the U.S. is supposed to have a service-based economy, not a disservice-based economy,

but she seemed unaware of the difference. Once she was done with her phone conversation, I found out that there was also a 59¢ a mile charge in addition to the \$19.95 daily rental. No problem, I figured, I was literally only driving "up the hill" and back for this performance.

Once I got to the van I found it to be in reasonably good shape with only about 12,000 miles on the clock. Still, in those few miles, someone had managed to bump the bumpers and put some good gouges in the paint. No matter, the rude clerk noted those on the invoice. That is, after I insisted that she do so.

While my original thought was that I could save money and be "greener" about running my business, driving around in a van with \$19.95 per day plastered on the side and then showing up in that van at a fancy country club put doubts in my mind. Plus, I'm not sure if someone at Ford was involved in seat design as a punishment for terrorists or someone just goofed up this driver's seat, but I've never sat in a more poorly designed vehicle seat.

Of course the first comment made when I showed up at the country club came from the director of catering, who asked if my truck had broken down. Great.

On the positive side, having all the cargo space was terrific. My equipment had plenty of room inside this big van. I almost felt like I should have done a bigger performance. After all was said and done I returned the van and paid \$47 and change, plus the gasoline to fill the van. Not bad, but I didn't do much driving at all.

IN SUMMARY

So, does the U-Haul idea work? Maybe, but I think my next van rental would be a minivan or full-size van without the rental price plastered on the side. Considering that I can use my ADJA discount on a van from Budget, that would likely be the next step. In terms of customer service, I know that nobody could possibly be more rude than the folks at our local U-Haul facility, so any experience would be more positive.

Ultimately, I decided to keep my old truck because it's paid for and still runs fine. If I were seriously considering a new vehicle I might see how small a DJ system I could build and then shop for a vehicle around that. With the all the nifty high-tech lights and minimalist sound systems available to us today, this would also be a good opportunity to tell my referring banquet halls how "green" my company is becoming. It would be a win-win. **MB**

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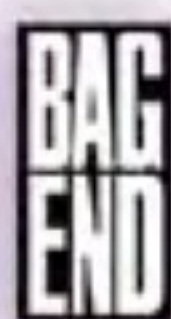
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\$80.75	KSD 575/2	MSR 575/2	HSR 575/72
\$84.15	KDE 575		HMI 575/GS
\$99.00	KSD 700SA	MSR 700SA	HTI 705/SE
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\$3.94	DYS 600w	\$5.59	FXL
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Mobile Musical Emergency Kit

100 songs to keep you from
experiencing entertainment disaster

By Jay Maxwell

If ever there was a contest for the strangest name for a road, one contestant would certainly be Too Goo Doo Road in Meggett, South Carolina, near Charleston. If one googles the phrase “middle of nowhere,” I’m fairly confident that Too Goo Doo shows up. The only reason anyone would take this road is as a shortcut from the city of Charleston to one of our beaches on Edisto Island. There are more curves on this road than houses and no gas stations at all.

Going to a wedding on Edisto Island three years ago, I had just rounded one of the sharpest curves on Too Goo Doo and was relieved to see a straight stretch of road for the next mile, when an explosive sound from the rear of my van made me think that a small stick of dynamite had been tossed at one of my tires. Sure enough, an explosion had taken place: The driver’s side rear tire had exploded. There was rubber all over the road. Fortunately, I maintained control of the vehicle and limped into someone’s driveway that was within range. After saying a prayer of thanks for my safety, I got out of the van and evaluated the damage. It appeared that there was no damage to the rim and a simple tire change should put me back on the road and heading to the wedding in a matter of minutes.

While still in a state of shock from the event, my mood changed to despair upon realizing that the car’s jack was not there. My only hope now was that maybe the driveway led to a house and that someone was home. There was house, but after several attempts at knocking with no reply, I

The 50 “Must Haves” for All Occasions

SONG	ARTIST	CATEGORY
ANNIVERSARY WALTZ	EDDIE HOWARD	Anniversary
BIRTHDAY	BEATLES	Birthday
HAPPY BIRTHDAY	EDDIE HOWARD	Birthday
SIXTEEN CANDLES	CRESTS	Birthday
ZYDECO	VARIOUS	Cajun
DRUM ROLL	VARIOUS	Effects
ELECTRIC SAMURAI	TOMOYASU HOTEI	Effects
HAWAII FIVE-O	VENTURES	Effects
OH YEAH	YELLO	Effects
ROCKY THEME	BILL CONTI	Effects
CECILIA	SIMON & GARFUNKEL	Fun
DANCING IN THE MOONLIGHT	KING HARVEST	Fun
GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN	CYNDI LAUPER	Fun
GREASE MEGAMIX	OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN	Fun
HANG ON SLOOPY	McCOYS	Fun
SWEET CAROLINE	NEIL DIAMOND	Fun
YOU NEVER EVEN CALLED ME	DAVID ALLAN COE	Fun
YOUR LOVE	OUTFIELD	Fun
BLUEGRASS	VARIOUS	Genre
CHA CHA	VARIOUS	Genre
FOX TROT	VARIOUS	Genre
I LOVE BEACH MUSIC	EMBERS	Genre
MERENGUE	VARIOUS	Genre
ROCKY TOP	OSBORNE BROTHERS	Genre
SALSA	VARIOUS	Genre
SUAVAMENTE	ELVIS CRESPO	Genre
TANGO	VARIOUS	Genre

reluctantly turned to walk back to the van. Then I heard a female voice behind the closed door ask if I needed help. As I pleaded my predicament to her, she said that her husband was on the way home and should arrive in about ten minutes from work. Ironically, her husband worked at a tire shop. True to her prediction, he pulled into the driveway within a few moments after she first told me help was on the way. As quick as a pit crew, this Good Samaritan took out his power jack from his truck, lifted my van, popped off the old tire, and slapped on the new wheel almost as swiftly as a NASCAR professional. After thanking them for saving the day, I was on my way and actually made it to the event with five minutes to spare. This experience taught me to always have an emergency road kit with me at all times—including a jack!

READY FOR ANYTHING
If there’s one lesson life repeatedly teaches us, it’s to be prepared. Often we learn our lessons from Too Goo Doo Road experiences. In my clothes bag that I take to every gig, there is a bottle of

A busload of folks from Louisiana showed up at a wedding wanting to hear some Cajun music. At the time, I was “fresh out” of Zydeco...

Advil pain reliever, spare tux studs, and an extra pair of black socks. Each is in there because of a valuable lesson learned in the past when I needed each of them, but did not have anything for a headache, forgot my cufflinks and button studs, and only had the pair of khaki socks that I had worn before the event to wear with my black tux. As parents, my wife and I always traveled with spare clothes for our two children when they were preschoolers in case they needed an unexpected change. We also had handy some wet-wipes for unexpected messes, Band-Aids for the occasional “boo boo,” and some Cheerios or crackers for those annoying hunger pains that often plague children.

Planning for emergencies, whether large or small, is always a smart avenue to pursue. The same is true for mobile DJs when planning ahead for what music to have in an “emergency music kit.” This issue’s list is actually in two parts. The first part focuses on the 50 songs that every DJ must have in their library in order to have a successful party. Every DJ and party guest will be intimately familiar with these party favorites. The second

The 50 “Must Haves” for All Occasions

ZORBA’S DANCE	GREEK TRADITIONAL	Greek
WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING	BING CROSBY	Irish
MAMBO, ITALIANO	DEAN MARTIN	Italian
HAVA NAGILAH	VARIOUS	Jewish
COPPERHEAD ROAD	STEVE EARLE	Line
AULD LANG SYNE	GUY LOMBARDO	New Years
AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL	RAY CHARLES	Patriotic
ARMED SERVICE’S SONGS	VARIOUS	Patriotic
GOD BLESS THE U.S.A.	LEE GREENWOOD	Patriotic
STAR SPANGLED BANNER	VARIOUS	Patriotic
BEER BARREL POLKA	LAWRENCE WELK	Polka
PENNSYLVANIA POLKA	FRANKIE YANKOVIC	Polka
GASOLINA	DADDY YANKEE	Reggaeton
ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST	QUEEN	Rock
CASEY JONES	GRATEFUL DEAD	Rock
CRAZY GAME OF POKER	O.A.R.	Rock
DON’T STOP BELIEVING	JOURNEY	Rock
LIVIN’ ON A PRAYER	BON JOVI	Rock
POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME	DEF LEPPARD	Rock
ROCK YOU LIKE A HURRICANE	SCORPIONS	Rock
CENTERFIELD	JOHN FOGERTY	Sports
ZOOT SUIT RIOT	CHERRY POPPIN’ DADDIES	Swing
TENNESSEE WALTZ	PATTI PAGE	Waltz

Top 40 Dance Songs

	SONG	ARTIST
1	BROWN EYED GIRL	VAN MORRISON
2	ELECTRIC (Slide) BOOGIE	MARCIA GRIFFITHS
3	BRICK HOUSE	COMMODORES
4	SWEET HOME ALABAMA	LYNYRD SKYNYRD
5	HEY YA!	OUTKAST
6	LOVE SHACK	B-52’s
7	CHA CHA SLIDE	MR. C - CASPER
8	SHOUT	OTIS DAY
9	Y.M.C.A.	VILLAGE PEOPLE
10	WE ARE FAMILY	SISTER SLEDGE
11	YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT	AC/DC
12	CELEBRATION	KOOL & THE GANG
13	DANCING QUEEN	ABBA
14	YEAH!	USHER
15	OLD TIME ROCK & ROLL	BOB SEGER
16	PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC	WILD CHERRY
17	TWIST	CHUBBY CHECKER
18	CHICKEN DANCE	EMERALDS
19	I WILL SURVIVE	GLORIA GAYNOR

play something we can dance to

section lists songs that are less popular and seldom played. They are similar to a car jack—you may not use them very often, but they are extremely useful when the occasion warrants.

Even a novice DJ would not be so naïve as to think that by merely having the Top 40 Dance and Top 10 Slow Songs that they are adequately prepared to entertain a crowd. However, these 50 songs are essentials that you should have to ensure that the night goes smoothly and ones that each DJ should possess at least two copies of just in case one gets lost or damaged. These are the songs that many guests have requested by saying, “Do you happen to have... ‘The Electric Slide’... ‘Hey Ya!’... ‘Cupid Shuffle’... or ‘We Are Family?’” You of course reply that you do have these songs, while you might be thinking that if you didn’t have these songs, you couldn’t call yourself a mobile disc jockey. These are the songs that if you had to tell a client that you didn’t have one, it would seal the deal that you would not be returning for a repeat engagement for that group any time during the next century.

EXCEPTIONAL...BUT ALSO ESSENTIAL

The main reason for this particular article is to concentrate on the relevancy of the second list. There is only one time each year that “Auld Lang Syne” is needed, which is of course at midnight on New Year’s Eve. Instead of counting on remembering to include it in your music system for this once a year event, carry it with you year round to make sure it’s there as revelers usher in the new year. On those few times that you are playing for either an ROTC event, a military ball, or a wedding where either the bride or groom is on active military duty, you will need their “armed forces service song” like “Anchors Aweigh” (Navy), “Marine’s Hymn,” “US Field Artillery” (Army) or “Wild Blue Yonder” (Air Force). Anniversary and birthday songs are staples to keep in your repertoire just in case someone comes up during the party and asks you to play an anniversary song for her grandparents who have been married for 57 years. There are several songs and general genres based on ethnicity in the list as well. In each of my company’s music libraries, we have at least one CD of bluegrass, Jewish favorites, polkas, Irish favorites, Italian and Greek tunes. Recently, we have added to our library additional songs for the Salsa, Merengue, and Reggaeton lovers.

Regardless of the region of the country that you live in, some of your guests may have traveled from areas where regional genres are the norm in their world. For example, in South Carolina we play beach music for people to do the state dance known as the “shag” at every event. We are not talking about Beach Boys style beach music, but songs from groups like the Embers, Tams, and Catalinas, that are mostly known only in the Carolinas. So, it is a wise idea to have a CD of “shag” music in your collection in case my neighbors show up at one of your events. This was a lesson I learned several years ago when a busload of folks from Louisiana showed up at a wedding wanting to hear some Cajun music. At the time, I was “fresh out” of Zydeco (i.e. Cajun music) but that genre has since been added to every company system as we await that

Top 40 Dance Songs

20	LETS GET IT STARTED	BLACK EYED PEAS
21	MUSTANG SALLY	WILSON PICKETT
22	ICE ICE BABY	VANILLA ICE
23	COTTON EYE JOE	REDNEX
24	BOOT SCOOTIN BOOGIE	BROOKS & DUNN
25	MACARENA	LOS DEL RIO
26	BILLIE JEAN	MICHAEL JACKSON
27	HUMPTY DANCE	DIGITAL UNDERGROUND
28	NEW YORK NEW YORK	FRANK SINATRA
29	THRILLER	MICHAEL JACKSON
30	SEXYBACK	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE
31	HOKEY POKEY	RAY ANTHONY
32	TIME OF MY LIFE	DIRTY DANCING SNDTRK
33	IN THE MOOD	GLENN MILLER
34	CUPID SHUFFLE	CUPID
35	CONGA	GLORIA ESTEFAN
36	LOW (Apple Bottom Jeans)	FLO RIDA
37	LOCO-MOTION	LITTLE EVA
38	JUMP ON IT (Apache)	SUGARHILL GANG
39	CRANK THAT (Soulja Boy)	SOULJA BOY
40	LIMBO ROCK	CHUBBY CHECKER

Top 10 Slow Songs

	SONG	ARTIST
1	WONDERFUL TONIGHT	ERIC CLAPTON
2	AT LAST	ETTA JAMES
3	WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD	LOUIS ARMSTRONG
4	COME AWAY WITH ME	NORAH JONES
5	LETS GET IT ON	MARVIN GAYE
6	UNFORGETTABLE	NATALIE-NAT COLE
7	HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY	VAN MORRISON
8	WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN	PERCY SLEDGE
9	YOU’VE LOST THAT LOVIN FEEL	RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS
10	CAN’T HELP FALLING IN LOVE	ELVIS PRESLEY

bus to arrive once again in our fair city.

A few of the songs are listed simply as “fun” or “rock” songs. There are party essentials, but not necessarily ones that people think about when they think about a dance song. If a “Dead Head” shows up at a black tie affair, you will want to be ready with a Grateful Dead tune and even people outside the state of New Jersey want to rock with “Livin’ On a Prayer” blasting through your speakers. On the East Coast, we always carry “Rock You Like a Hurricane” just in case a hurricane is brewing in the Atlantic and a guest wants to dedicate a song to the storm. Other tunes listed are as diverse as a drum roll for a sound effect when draw-

ing for a big door prize to “Rocky Top” if someone wants to show off their clogging skills.

It’s my hope that is that you never hear your tire explode—especially on a road in the middle of nowhere—and find yourself without the necessary emergency tools to make the needed repairs. Make sure you have a solid spare tire, the right tire iron, and a working jack before venturing out on the road. It’s also my advice to you that you double check your musical emergency kit to verify that this issue’s 100 songs are included. Otherwise, you might hear an explosion from a guest instead of a “thank you” when they say, “Play Something We Can Dance To!” **MB**



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Don't Panic!

The DJ's Guide to Emergency Preparedness

By Stu Chisholm

I HAD JUST BEGAN TO RELAX.

Every DJ knows that moment; when you're done setting up for an event and have changed into your tux and are now ready to dazzle the crowd with your skills and personality. The hard part is over. Little did I know the trial that was to come...

It was time to switch-on my main amp, a brand new, state-of-the-art unit that had performed flawlessly just hours before during another party. But tonight would be different: no sound. Another feeling came over me that many DJs also know: that panic that settles into your stomach like a boulder in quicksand. What now? Although I had never actually had to use it before, I did have one ray of hope that helped me keep my sanity: my emergency kit.

TECH SUPPORT IN A BOX

99 percent of the problems that a DJ will face are predictable ones. In this case, I had noticed ahead of time that my amps, along with several other pieces of gear, had fuses! So it made sense to pull each fuse, write down its amperage and voltage ratings and pick up a box at the local electronics store. In this case, a 33-cent fuse literally saved my show! Over the years, I've also found the following items invaluable:

Batteries, especially if you depend on wireless mics or have devices that "remember" settings, etc.

Spare bulbs for ALL lighting effects. Don't forget spares for any Littlelites, Mag-Lites, rack lights, etc.

Assorted connectors, including, of course the DJ-standard RCA to RCA and RCA to 1/4" configurations, along their various male to male / female to female permutations. Be sure to have spares of all the different cables and couplers you use. (Obviously...But also remember to replace that cable you used in an emergency with a fresh one for the emergency kit after the fact!)

A good flashlight! You can't fix what you can't see.

Ground adaptors to use three-prong plugs in two-prong outlets. (Unfortunately, a necessary evil in many locations.)

Electrical tape

A soldering iron, and only resin core solder for electronics. Practice your basic soldering skills beforehand!

Other electrical supplies, such as assorted butt connectors, lugs and wire caps.

Scotch and masking tape, plus markers. (If you thought I was going to tell you to carry a flask of Dewar's or Johnnie Walker, sorry to disappoint!)

Super glue.

Hand tools: needle nose and standard pliers, dykes, assorted screwdrivers, wire stripper, etc.

An isolator block to remove line hum in an XLR run (RAPCO Isoblox or similar).

A digital multi-meter.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

The majority of problems have simple solutions and are, more often than not, caused by connec-

tors and jacks simply wearing out or being damaged. Get good at quickly replacing any RCA, XLR, 1/4" or Neutrik Speak-On / Power-Con connectors that are in your rig.

Even without electronics skills, a digital multi-meter can show the line voltage from an electrical outlet, check batteries and cables and perform many other useful functions. I originally packed mine thinking I'd never need it, but end up using it nearly every gig.

If you use Ultimate Support or similar types of speaker stands, it is always a good idea to keep some spare knobs and plastic parts around for them, "just in case." While they may have a great warranty, if you drop a stand on pavement in the winter and crack the cold, plastic parts, spares suddenly become REALLY important. (It can get pretty darn cold here in Detroit!) It's also easy to accidentally over-tighten knobs, strip-out bolts, etc., and they will also just plain wear out over time.

BEYOND THE BASICS

Masking tape and markers often come in handy when you're doing a show that differs from your norm, so you can I.D. which device is on which channel of your mixer. They're also good for labeling breakers at the electrical panel.

Pack replacement screws, nuts and bolts for anything in your rig that uses them. Life on the road can loosen things up, pop screws and strip bolts. Note the type and size of those in your rig (lighting effects, road cases, tensor lamps and mic booms—everything!) and pack a few spares. I also carry a few self-tapping wood screws, for those unexpected moments, like the time a banquet hall table was about to collapse under the weight of an

ice sculpture when a support came loose. A wood screw and two minutes can actually make you the hero of the day!

ROAD-READY

You may have individual needs for your specific circumstance, so take the time to think about each item in your show. Note anything your DJ gear or other equipment might use (fuses, bulbs, connectors, etc.) and keep a supply onhand. With a well-equipped emergency kit, you're ready for almost anything that life on the road can dish out! Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**

Stu Chisholm, a music collector since age seven, a mobile DJ since 1979, and sometime nightclub DJ in suburban Detroit, has also done radio, voice-over work, and has even spun at a roller rink. He attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting. At the February 2009 Mobile Beat DJ Show in Las Vegas (MBLV.09) Stu will make his debut as a seminar speaker, as he brings some of the info from his new book, The Complete DJ (ProDJ Publishing) to a live audience.

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Taking Care of Your Business and Your Life

Important aspects of a reliable back-up plan

By Ryan Burger

BACKUP YOUR DATA...ALL OF IT

Do you use an online tool like DJ Webmin/DJ Intelligence, GigBuilder, DJ Event Planner? If so, the majority of the work is taken care of for you, but you should still keep a regularly updated backup copy of your data with any of these services. Whether you use an offline program or commit the information to hard copies, make sure you have copies of the information stored somewhere outside of your offices. If you have an

office outside of your home, store a copy of it at your home. If you don't, have a copy of the info backed up every week or two stored at another family member's house or other secure location. Additionally, if you have a digital (MP3, etc.) music library, make a backup copy on an extra hard drive and store it similarly.

GET NETWORKED

If you are a single operator, do you have someone who can cover your gigs if you are knocked totally out of commission? And even if you are a multi-system company, are you friendly enough with your competitors that they could pick up your events if you had major problems on a particular weekend? For example, in my area recently a local DJ was in a terrible ATV accident and one company stepped forward and covered the gigs completely, but needed an extra sound system, which my company provided. The key is having friends in the business; that even though you compete with them for some gigs, you are on good terms with them and you can work together until you get back on your feet.

BE WELL ADVISED

DJs are constantly trying to set themselves apart as being professionals at what they do, having to communicate to potential clients that they are much better than Cousin Bob with his iPod and stereo system and his cool Radio Shack lights. Well, then you too should be hiring professionals to take care of YOU. Do you have an accountant you can call, an attorney who is familiar with your business and who you can get on the phone within minutes? Don't try to do all of this stuff yourself—just like a bride with her iPod party playlist and her kid brother stuttering out the introductions! Hire a professional and make sure they get to know your business well.

TIGHTEN UP THE FAMILY TIES

If your business has trouble, you have trouble, and vice versa. Being self employed, whether it's your only income or just part time, your busi-

ness life dramatically affects your home life, and what's going on at home inevitably impacts your business. Your family must be on the "same page" with you for your business to be successful. And you need to balance family and work in a way that benefits both, rather than leaning too heavily in either direction, if you want to run a thriving entertainment company.

That's why when interviewing for potential new employees I want to meet their family and friends whenever possible. A piece that I learned at a recent Entreleadership seminar with Dave Ramsey (www.daveramsey.com) is that he always meets the spouse of any new employee that he is considering hiring to be part of his team.

Personally, in the last year or two I have spent a lot of time working on my life outside of work and it has had a tremendous impact on my work life [see *The Plan: Finding Financial Peace* (page 34)], you need to get all your houses in order to have peace and enjoyment in your life.

DON'T GET BURNED OUT: TAKE TIME OFF!

For a good DJ, it can be very easy to keep taking on gigs until every Friday and every Saturday is totally full. If you are doing that, first of all your prices are too low, and second of all you are going to go crazy! Plan to take off at least 8-10 weekends a year if possible. If you think you can't afford to do this, you have to realize what you are really worth and raise your rates so that you CAN afford time off. Once you get down to an average of three weekends full in a month, remind yourself that once you get that one more gig, you are taking the other weekend off. In some cases you can probably predict certain weekends that are almost always dead. For instance, for us, Spring Break is almost always dead, along with the last two weeks of July. Plan time away from the business for those weekends, and make the most of the down time to be with friends and family or to do other beneficial, non-business-related activities. Believe it or not, your business success—and your personal "sanity"—depends on taking time to NOT to work! **MB**

20TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY AD OF GRATITUDE

I AM MARK PEACE THOMAS AND I WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THOSE INDIVIDUALS THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO MY SUCCESSFUL CAREER AS A FULL-TIME MOBILE DISC JOCKEY AND MASTER OF CEREMONIES. YOU HELPED ME GO FROM A STRUGGLING NEWCOMER CHARGING \$350.00 IN 1989 TO A TRAINED PROFESSIONAL COMMANDING \$2,300.00 IN 2009.



BEING A FULL-TIME ENTERTAINER HAS ALLOWED ME TO TRAVEL AROUND THE WORLD, OWN MY OWN HOMES AND TREAT MY SUB-CONTRACTORS WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MY TOP ENTERTAINERS FOR THEIR PROFESSIONALISM, HARD WORK, REFERRALS AND FRIENDSHIP. MIKE BUTLER IS NO LONGER WITH US BUT HIS MEMORY LIVES ON.

JASON MICHAELS



DJ ZAN 'THE MAN'



JEFF DiDOMENICO



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SCOTT NORRIS



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THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR ME EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE BUSY WITH YOUR OWN CAREER AND OUR TWO BEAUTIFUL BOYS AND NEWEST 'AWESOME ENTERTAINERS':

DJ CRYBABY AND DJ NIGHTOWL.



JC PEASEY PORTRAITS



DISCLAIMER: THERE ARE MANY COLLEAGUES THAT HAVE HELPED ME THROUGH THE YEARS AND I APOLOGIZE IF I MISSED YOU. NOW, IF I COULD ONLY FIND A WAY TO MAKE THIS 'PERSONAL AD' JUST 1% BETTER... AH YES, A SPECIAL SHOUT OUT TO: RANDY BARTLETT (WWW.THEONEPERCENTSOLUTION.COM).

A Practical Plan for Recession-Proofing Your Business

It's never too late to make positive changes

By DJ Dr. Drax

The time when a recession hits is the wrong time to start to worry about recession-proofing your business. The right time is when things are up and your market is strong. But if you are caught unprepared, many of these advance warning sign and tips can still help you minimize the impact.

Recessions are excellent for exposing the weaknesses of your business model. They may teach you rather hard lessons about where you need to improve. One thing to take hope in is that, even in the darkest economies, people have always spent money for entertainment and parties, and occasions like weddings.

And recessions provide opportunities for the prepared. In the movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, George Bailey tried to console the panic-stricken investors in his building and loan with comments about the position of Mr. Potter. One thing he said was, "He's not selling, he's buying!" While nobody cheers for Mr. Potter, we all understand the message: Recessions, and even depressions, are cyclical. They come, they go.

Those who understand this don't panic; those who don't understand are swept up in the panic and fear. There is an old scripture that says, "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear." That should be our anthem, our battle cry. Get prepared and don't fear the cyclical events that will happen, but ride them out successfully.

I have prepared what I am calling my...

TOP 10 WAYS TO RECESSION-PROOF YOUR BUSINESS

These are what I see as the most important areas to deal with, in order to keep your business from going broke in tough times. Following these suggestions should help you to ride out the storms, even to cross the stormy seas of changing markets in recessionary times.

1

Have a well-written, completely documented business plan. This, more than any other single thing, will help you be prepared. It will alert you to a slowdown of your own business well before someone from Washington DC or Wall Street comes on the news to let the world know the economy is stagnating. Know where you're going, how you will get there, and what you will do for given perturbations in the marketplace. If you don't have a plan, start one today. There are software packages available to help you get started.

We have all seen the Ameriprise commercials with Dennis Hopper of hippy and *Easy Rider* fame. Sitting or standing out in the middle of nowhere, with the opening bars of "Give Me Some Lovin'" by the Spencer Davis Group playing in the background, he talks about your dreams and aspirations with vivid imagery, and closes with the line, "What you need is a plan!"

How true that is, not only for dreams, but for survival.

2

Live on less than you earn. Put your business on a diet. Don't consume/waste paper, ink, fuel or time—anything that isn't essential to your core purpose. Cut wasteful trips for meetings and other activities; instead, bundle them into a single trip. Put off unneeded purchases. And so on...I'm sure you can think of more ways to trim down and shape up.

3

Avoid debt, at all costs. Your business shouldn't borrow what it can't easily pay back in hard times. Too many businesses borrow for items that are nice but nonessential to the survival or profitability of the company. Do NOT use credit cards unless you can pay the balance off when the statement arrives. Paying interest of 23% or even lower is not a wise

strategy. There is an old adage about interest that goes, "Those that understand interest, earn it, those that don't, pay it!" Einstein is often credited with saying that the most powerful force in the universe is...compound interest. Words to consider carefully.

If you're in debt, get out as fast as possible. Being debt-free will do more to empower you and recession-proof your business than almost any other single thing you can do.

4

"Tithe" to yourself. The biblical concept of giving 10% for religious reasons also makes basic business sense. Save at least 10% of your gross earnings in a liquid account, such as a savings account. Look for safety, stability and liquidity. Do not worry about growth or earnings on this money. This is your safety net. Don't gamble with it, invest it in stocks, or use it for discretionary spending, dipping into it for consumer goods. It doesn't need sharks swimming below it, nipping at it from time to time; it should stay on dry, solid land. This is what will keep you from going broke if times get really tough.

5

Fight the urge to reduce your rates. Discounts are rarely as good as you

might think they are. Cutting prices costs you hard dollars by decreasing the perceived value of your services in the market place. If the recession lasts six months or a year, it could well take you one or more years after the recession to regain your rate structure and position. You will have to climb that ladder all over again. You end up with potentially three bad years instead of just one.

Simply stated: Your rates should be the very last thing to be placed on the altar of sacrifice. Instead, find ways to increase your perceived value at your existing price point. Look to other large companies. Price is always the last thing to go. They do giveaways, intangible add-ons and offer coupons for savings on multiple events or for future events. If you wonder about this, think about the last thing you bought that had a mail-in rebate. Did you send it in? Most buyers never do. It represents untapped, increased perceived value. If they do submit it, honor it completely. This will generate more good will and increased perceived value.

6

Expand your networking efforts. Recessions are when everyone comes out of the woodwork wanting to network. We all know what they are really looking for: business. Develop your network *ahead of time*. Networks are not as much about referrals as about working relationships. Build great relationships with others in your market, and you will have others looking out for you and seeking to use or recommend your services over the Johnny-come-lately. In a time of recession, use all tools available to keep yourself in their "Top of Mind Awareness"—after all, there will be a lot more people trying to attract their attention.

7

Care for your equipment and other tools. Fight the urge to acquire and the marketing pleas telling you how good your business will be if you just buy X, Y, or Z. Only replace equipment that is failing to perform its designed function. Make what you have last as long as you can. Upgrade or replace only when your business plan tells you that it makes sense to do so. As strange as it sounds to gear-minded entertainers,

most customers care about the service you provide, not the tools that you used to do it. Repair or clean up your tools to be serviceable and useful. Exercise restraint in new purchases.

8

Understand the sales cycle. Too many service providers think that learning to work the sales cycle, or learning to sell effectively, is somehow "selling out" their talents. I disagree. In recessionary times, it is the businesses that are firing on all eight cylinders that will survive and even thrive. Learn to be an effective communicator about what you do, what it is that your business does. Do you have a defining statement? If not, why not? A defining statement, well-written and prepared, projects expertise and successfulness to those who read it or hear it. It then becomes a lens through which (coupled with a business plan) all decisions, particularly those involving finance should be looked at. Learn to sell and how it works. Become effective at it.

9

Reevaluate your marketing message. Is it direct? Is it clear? Harry Beckwith says time is the new money and I believe him. Make your marketing clear. Find out what it is that your clients are really looking for. Target it. Focus in on it like a laser; show how your expertise is superior in that area. Do that with clarity. It will help you attract business, and increase the perceived value of your expertise. If your marketing message isn't generating traffic to your door, it's the wrong message or your delivery is poor.

10

Invest in yourself. Develop new skills, strengthen weaknesses; look for where you can improve, not where you're succeeding. While building every aspect is useful, only by honing the skills you're worst at will you make the largest impact in the delivery of your services and, in turn, generate increased business. It can be the difference between you getting the contract or someone else.

Also invest in your family. Give them the best parts of you, because

Your rates should be the very last thing to be placed on the altar of sacrifice. Instead, find ways to increase your perceived value at your existing price point.

when you do, their support will be there when you need it in recessionary times. Strong families make for stronger, healthier businesses.

Recessions are cyclical; they are a part of the circle of economic life. They don't have to fill you with fear—they can be great opportunities for growth, helping you to gain a clearer focus and move forward to even greater success. **MB**

Dr. Drax is National President and Executive Director of ADJA.



Launching Out on Your Own, Despite the Economy

Marketing expert offers tips for starting your own business, even during a recession

By Rachel Friedman

Most people get up in the morning, grab some coffee and head out to a job where they work for peanuts, work hard, and work for someone else. Many people wonder: "If I worked just as hard for myself, could I still make as much money and maintain a living?" The truth is, according to Maria Simone, author of *Passion 2 Prosperity* (from BookSurge - www.passion2prosperity.com), most people can make far more working for themselves. And they can do it, even in a down economy—even in a recession. Her foundations for a strong entrepreneurial business apply even to "wage slaves" and hourly workers who think they don't have what it takes to succeed:

1

Start with your passion. The French writer Françoise de Motteville once wrote, "The true way to render ourselves happy is to love our work and find in it our pleasure." Those words ring true with any entrepreneurial enterprise, because if you start with an occupation or vocation that drives our passion, then you'll never have to worry about losing interest.

2

Have a vision. Visualizing your business, from what you want to do to how you'll do it, how you'll market it and how you'll appeal to your customers and clients, is the first step. Most new businesses start and fail quickly not because of a lack of market opportunity, but because of a lack of vision.

3

Make millions serving millions. Find a way to bring your company to the masses, so that you aren't serving just a few people, but a whole lot of people. If you do something you love, and do it to help a lot of people, it's virtually impossible to fail.

4

Build multiple income streams. Many entrepreneurs choose one idea and market it one way. In reality, the same idea or concept can be sold many ways and many times. The film industry makes its money by making a movie once, and then selling it many times (box office, DVD, first-run broadcast, premium cable, pay-per-view, basic cable, syndication and product licensing). If you can mirror that model, you can increase your income exponentially and make multiple incomes from essentially the same job.

5

Be creative. One of the main secrets to success in business is being able to package and promote what you do in unique and creative ways. Think "three-dimensionally;" approach marketing yourself in ways that separate you from your competition and emphasize your unique selling proposition.

6

Banish fear. There isn't a single decision you can make in your personal or professional life that should be based on fear and anxiety. If you plan well, do what you love, and market yourself creatively, there is no reason you shouldn't believe in yourself. Make decisions based on strategy and rooted in accentuating the positive.

The most important thing an entrepreneur can do...is give themselves permission to do their dream and realize that success is possible for anyone. —Maria Simone

"The most important thing an entrepreneur can do," says Simone, "is give themselves permission to do their dream and realize that success is possible for anyone. You need to know how to live an enlightened life and break through any limiting beliefs that get in the way."

CULTIVATING THE PASSION

In her consultancy, Simone helps people "architect" the most perfect business and develop "next steps" to transform ideas and talents into revenue-generating products, attract investors and sponsors, and manifest customers with ease. She's also incorporated spiritual principles in her business and life, and she feels her career has really taken off because of it.

Simone sees collaboration as an essential way to succeed, as opposed to constantly competing against others. "Dog-eat-dog" is becoming a thing of the past," she says.

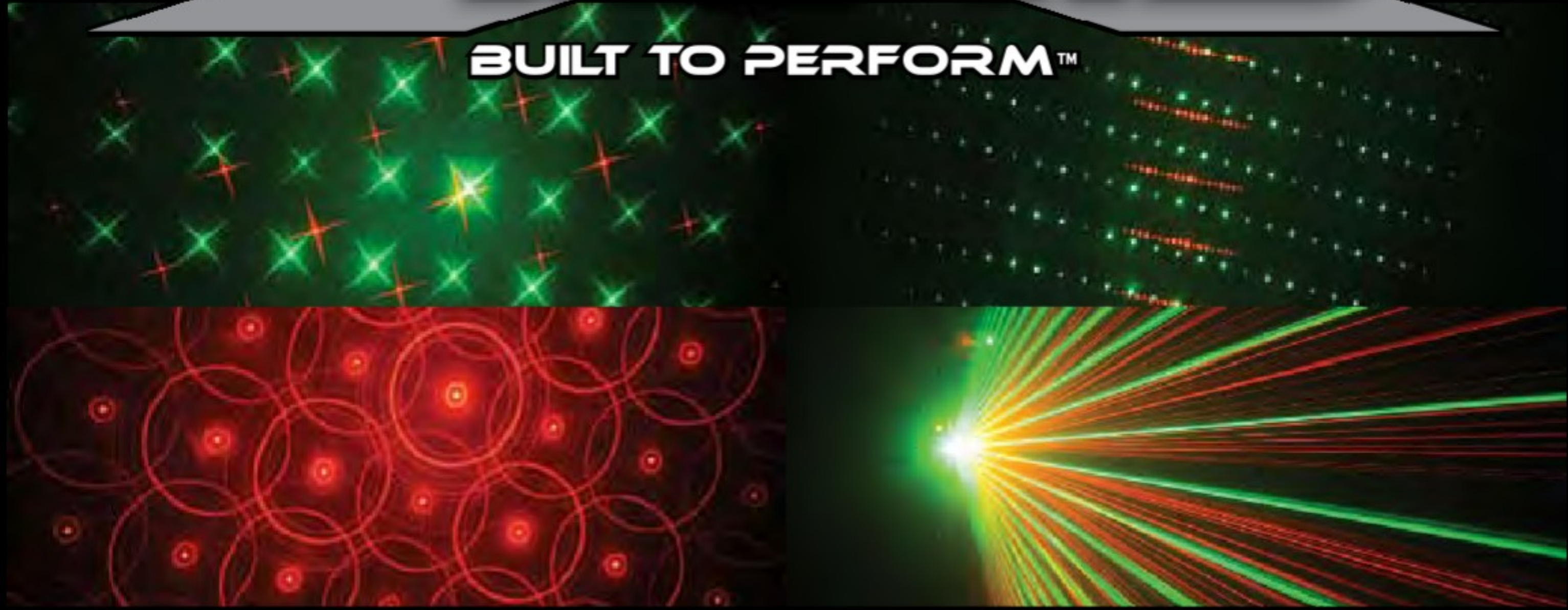
"People are complaining about the economy but I think this is a great time to start a business," says this mentor to entrepreneurs. "There should be no separation between personal and business life—people should have complete integration for a more meaningful life." **MB**

For more about Maria Simone and to download her free business building tools, go to <http://www.passion2prosperity.com>.

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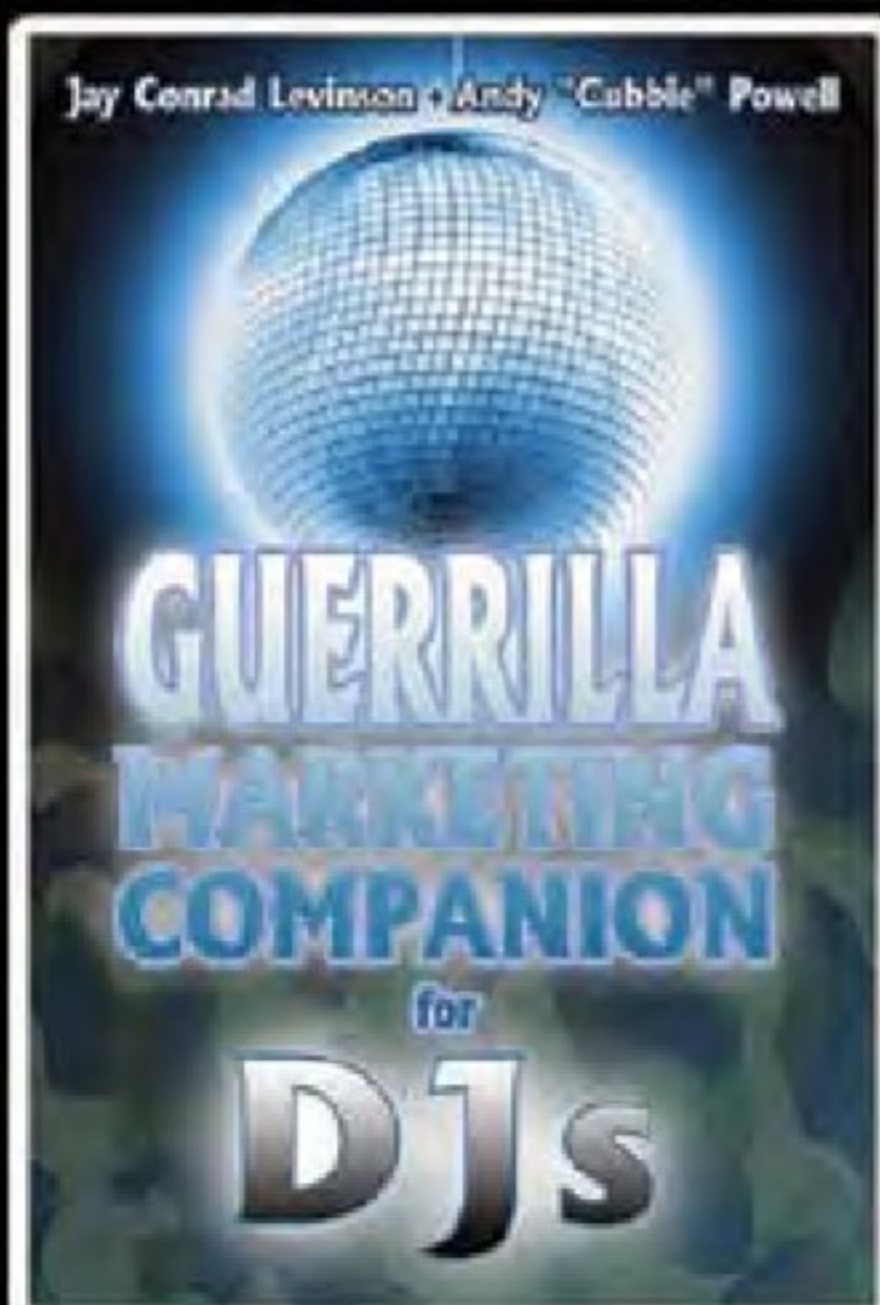
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Andy Powell is the National Sales Director for Mobile Beat Magazine and ProDJ.Com (ProDJ Publishing). He has a background in consumer and commercial lending and marketing. He is a former professional baseball mascot where he acquired his nickname "Cubbie" that everyone still calls him to this day. He got his start in the ProDJ family as a DJ. From there he was able to help grow the local DJ business over 50% which enabled ProDJ Publishing to purchase Mobile Beat Magazine and Trade Shows. Since starting with Mobile Beat he has been able to work with many new and established companies to help them launch new products and strengthen their presence in the mobile DJ industry. When he is not traveling, looking for new products for the DJ Market, he enjoys spending time with his family. He really enjoys working for ProDJ Publishing and if you don't believe it, just ask him for his business card....it will tell you "He is just a Fat Kid Living a Dream...."!

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ProDJ Publishing

Finding Financial Peace in a Volatile Economy

Following expert advice: a testimony to success

By Marc Andrews

Just about a year ago my wife and I started taking a class called Financial Peace University. It was a two to three-hour commitment every week for 13 weeks. It changed our lives.

Financial Peace University is a program produced by Dave Ramsey's Lampo Group out of Nashville, Tennessee (www.daveramsey.com). Dave is a nationally syndicated radio talk show whose mission is to get everyone out of debt.

When I say it changed our lives, I mean not just our financial lives but our lives in general. As we got control over our finances we started to see many other positive changes. According to DaveRamsey.Com and the American Bankers Association, the average family today carries \$8,000 in debt, and at the time we were more than average. My business at the time was in debt also. Over the last year, with the help of my wife and understanding employees, I have been able to bring our finances into line, both in business and in personal life. We have been able to raise the company's profitability by handling finances in a more organized manner and getting spending under control—rather than raising prices.

TAKING CONTROL

In these wacked out economic times, it is more important than ever to gain complete control over your spending and to minimize debt as

quickly as possible. These guiding principles will help you get both your personal financial life and your business life in order! Dave Ramsey's 7 Baby Steps to begin your journey to personal financial peace are as follows:

DESIGNATE \$1,000 TO START AN EMERGENCY FUND.

PAY OFF ALL DEBT USING THE "DEBT SNOWBALL" (SEE SIDEBAR)

BUILD SAVINGS FOR 3 TO 6 MONTHS OF EXPENSES

INVEST 15% OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME INTO ROTH IRAS AND PRE-TAX RETIREMENT

START A COLLEGE FUND FOR YOUR CHILDREN

PAY OFF YOUR HOME EARLY

BUILD WEALTH...AND ALSO GIVE IT!

I'm pretty sure my employees are rather sick of hearing me bring up Ramsey, but it's something I believe in. Having "financial peace" has brought more peace to our household and to our business. While we are still climbing out of where we put ourselves, we know that we are improving our financial situation every month. The key to this concept of finances for us has been budgeting by envelopes and keeping track of everything. You know, the old system where your Grandma used to keep Grandpa's check divided up into envelopes and budgeted from there. When the food envelope was empty, we were done buying food for that week. We personally use this system to the point that when our pay-days come around, we literally go to the bank and pull out several hundred dollars in cash. It's then divided up into Food, Gas, General Shopping, Waste Money and a few other categories.

PAYING WITH CASH?

Now I do not recommend that you run your business the same way. But the key is understanding WHY you work from cash. Basically because it hurts more when you use cash, when you pay with something that they don't give you back when they are done with it. Think about it, when you pay with a credit card, they borrow the card for about 20 seconds and then give it back to you. My company now runs completely on "cash." By cash I don't mean we send cash or checks to pay all of our bills. We use our credit cards...and *pay them off every month*. I don't just mean pay the minimum payment, but pay them off. We may charge up to \$10-\$15,000 on a card in a month but we are paying the same amount back in. We use the plastic only for its convenience. Additionally, because we are using a card with perks, we get a rebate of between \$60 and \$100 a month (Discover Card up to 1% back).

Even better if you are good at tracking your finances and have a cushion in your business funds, I would recommend going to a debit card. The key is to keep the transactions up to date in your accounting software so you know that the money has come out. It's like a check; so you have to keep a log of your transactions. They will

let you overdraw on a debit card, but not as far as they will let you on your credit cards. As Dave Ramsey says "since a debit card is directly linked to your bank account, it's a convenient way to purchase things without incurring debt." The power of a debit card is the same as a credit card, MasterCard and Visa are still backing them. The advantage of a debit card is that you don't have interest, late and overlimit fees, and more fees on top of the fees.

In these wacked out economic times, it is more important than ever to gain complete control over your spending and to minimize debt as quickly as possible. These guiding principles will help you get both your personal financial life and your business life in order! For more information on Dave Ramsey and his books check out www.daveramsey.com or click on the link at MobileBeat.Com. **MB**

Dave Ramsey's most recent book, The Total Money Makeover: A Proven Plan for Financial Fitness, distills his key debt reduction and money management concepts into a practical plan of action. His nationally syndicated radio program, The Dave Ramsey Show, is heard by nearly 3 million listeners each week on more than 375 radio stations throughout the United States, as well as on XM and Sirius satellite radio.

Debt Snowball

THE TRUTH ABOUT HOW TO GET OUT OF DEBT ACCORDING TO DAVE RAMSEY

MYTH: I should pay off the debt with the highest interest rate first to get out of debt quickly.

TRUTH: You should pay off the smallest debt first to create the greatest momentum in your debt snowball.

The math seems to lean more toward paying the highest interest debts first, but what I have learned is that personal finance is 20% head knowledge and 80% behavior. You need some quick wins in order to stay pumped enough to get out of debt completely. When you start knocking off the easier debts, you will start to see results and you will start to win in debt reduction.

The principle is to stop everything except minimum payments and focus on one thing at a time. Otherwise, nothing gets accomplished because all your effort is diluted.

First accumulate \$1,000 cash as an emergency fund. Then begin intensely getting rid of all debt (except the house) using my debt snowball plan. List your debts in order with the smallest payoff or balance first. Do not be concerned with interest rates or terms unless two debts have similar payoffs, then list the higher interest rate debt first. Paying the little debts off first gives you quick feedback, and you are more likely to stay with the plan. (Source: <http://www.daveramsey.com/etc/cms/index.cfm?intContentID=4055>)

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Improv and the Entertainer

The ins and outs of on-the-fly performance

By Mike Ficher

Strange as the analogy may initially appear, the parallels between creating successful improv and crafting memorable experiences for our mobile entertainment clients are remarkably rich.

While many types of improv exist, from long-form plays to skits to games, basically, performers create a scene or play a game based on suggestions—usually just one or two—from a host and/or an audience. On the spot, no script, no play-calling huddle, no consultation...just creativity on the fly. No two scenes or shows are alike. Sound familiar?

PREPARING TO BE SPONTANEOUS

Improv players work as a team to produce a snippet of theatre, albeit often a bit of a wacky or slightly off-center one. Like Colin Mochrie, Ryan Stiles and Wayne Brady of *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* fame, performers try to produce an engaging, entertaining, usually coherent but occasionally bizarre, slice of life for the audience, based on their submissions and input. If the troupe succeeds, the audience will laugh with them or grin at the absurdity—and/or accuracy—of the relationship and the situation. If they struggle a bit, well, on to the next game. Sound familiar?

Perhaps, surprisingly, to those unfamiliar with the art, improv players generally practice extensively to develop teamwork and trust, to

hone their skills in creating lucid, flowing scenes, much like mobile entertainers—who may not be receive similar recognition—prepare and practice bits to enhance their chance for success. Then, improv entertainers execute on the spot without a net, modifying and adjusting as needed to create the most memorable experience possible. Sound familiar?

Given the parallels, what tools, knowledge or experience in improvisational comedy can translate into assistance for a mobile entertainer?

UNITED WE STAND

"The goal of every improviser is to make the team look good. Period," noted Renie McClay, president

Split-second decisions are presented to spin a one-liner, activate a sampled rim shot, join the dance floor, or let a tender moment unfold and grow without an audio response. Do you seize those moments with confidence, grace and humility?

of Sales and Marketing Training and an improv comedy teacher for No Foam Productions in the Chicago area in a recent newsletter. "When that happens, the performance works and the audience is pleased."

Similarly, contrary to self-serving conventional wisdom, success at a gig is not restricted solely to the efforts of the entertainer. Working in conjunction with a caterer, photographer, videographer, facility manager, florist, and, more frequently, other entertainers, the team works diligently to create a seamless, engaging and memorable event for the client.

Yes, like an improv group, individuals will sometimes take center stage, but, overall, success is commonly attributable to the efforts of the entire group. A wedding reception, fundraiser, or holiday party's success will rest on the efforts of

the team, with the entertainer often rising front and center.

LETTING MOMENTS UNFOLD

The fundamental underpinning of successful improv play is "Yes, and..." Simply, you agree with the other person or people and their ideas in a scene and add along the same thread. Conflict is generally avoided and teamwork is crucial to the success of the scene. Denying, ignoring or canceling another player's idea can render a scene rudderless or incoherent, thus confusing or distracting the audience. Listening, observing and being in the moment are paramount to a thriving improv scene.

Some of my client's most memorable moments were not activities that I initiated. Rather, I reacted, supported and added to something that was developing on the dance floor, a thought offered during a consultation or the barest thread of a foundational idea at an event. By accepting or acknowledging an audience's idea, the entertainer has conscious, or even unconscious, buy-in. The matter, then, advances to adding just the right ingredients for execution—the "sale" has already been made—with the chance for success greatly enhanced.

SET THE SCENE AND CUT TO THE CHASE

In improv, players quickly establish a platform, the who/what/when/where of a scene. Expedient communication of the platform provides the audience with context and the actors with a discernible starting point from which to advance a story. In the mobile entertainment world, particularly at a wedding, an entertainer's platform is most often clearly established—the bride and groom, a wedding, today, the reception facility.

Since scenes in games-style improv are often short, "daring to suck big" is encouraged. To the point, over-the-top reactions and larger-than-life characters cut to the essence of the scene. No time for small talk—initiate, then do something with the story, quickly. In the mobile entertainment environment, split-second decisions are presented to spin a one-liner, activate a sampled rim shot, join the dance floor, or let a tender moment unfold and grow without an audio response. Do you seize those moments with confidence, grace and humility?

A PLACE IN THE SUN

Improvisers too concerned about their constant presence in the spotlight often struggle to inspire trust in their teammates and offer consistency in their performances. Successful improvisers strike an artful balance between selectively rising to the moment for the sake of the performance, and seamlessly integrating their efforts for the benefit of the team. Sound familiar? **MB**

In addition to owning and operating Dance Express, a mobile entertainment company, Mike Ficher is a member of Triage improv group and the Around the Bend Players sketch comedy/old time radio recreation troupe in Bend, Oregon.



Fundamentals of Improv

Mike Ficher will be offering workshops on how to leverage the precepts of improv to enhance mobile entertainment at MBLV.09 in Las Vegas, this February. Don't miss this hands-on chance to improve your DJ/MC presentation by building your improvisation chops!
—Ed.

Improvisation is the art of creating relationships, taking slices of life, and creating scenes without the use of scripts, on the spot. Here are a few of the basics and their applications in the mobile entertainment world:

AGREE

Accepting what fellow performers present is paramount to successful improv. If my scene partner announces we are in a bustling bazaar in downtown Calcutta during lunch hour and I comment on an alluring Alaskan sunset, the bit is in trouble.

Ever seen that at an event featuring a mobile entertainer? How many performers try to

force the action at an event? How many miss opportunities to build on something that is happening at an event in order to promote their own agendas?

LISTEN

You can't accept and add to what has been presented if you didn't hear it. Opportunities to elevate a scene and create memorable improv start with critical listening.

A wise woman once told me, "Listen to what I mean, not what I say." Sage advice. Do you *really* hear what a client *really* wants at an event? Do you pay attention to what is happening around you at an event, constantly evaluating how you can enhance the activity? Are you sensitive to other event providers?

BE IN THE MOMENT

Concentrate on the now. Listen and watch for subtle verbal and physical cues to gauge the narrative's progression. Do not invest

time planning ahead or making assumptions—you'll miss what's going on in the scene. Focus on the moment.

When you're in the middle of one event, are you thinking about the next one? Returning a call to a client? Something going on in your family? Whatever is happening in your life or in your business has to be checked at the door at an event. The clients and their guests deserve your best effort—and that starts with being in the moment.

DON'T JUDGE

If a player's ideas are regularly dismissed, they will become less comfortable offering them. Accepting without judgment is central to establishing a supportive environment on stage. Making strong choices, with team success always in the forefront, will result in many funny and fantastic moments, be it an improv gig or a mobile entertainment event.

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By Steve Moody

Here's another example of thinking "outside the box" in order to earn extra income during the "work" week. Some entertainers may be apprehensive about this idea—at first—so let me preface this article by encouraging you to read the following in its entirety. This just may be one of those little ideas that can pay off big, once you get the full picture.

Like most folks in this industry, my DJ work was once limited to weekend events. Then, in the fall of 1993, I was given the chance to try my hand at something very unique. What started out as a small, once-a-week event, turned into an enormous success story. The concept I am about to share with you has afforded me the opportunity to make my full-time livelihood as an entertainer. Without exaggeration, I set up my DJ equipment over 300 nights every year.

DANCING WITHOUT THE TWANG

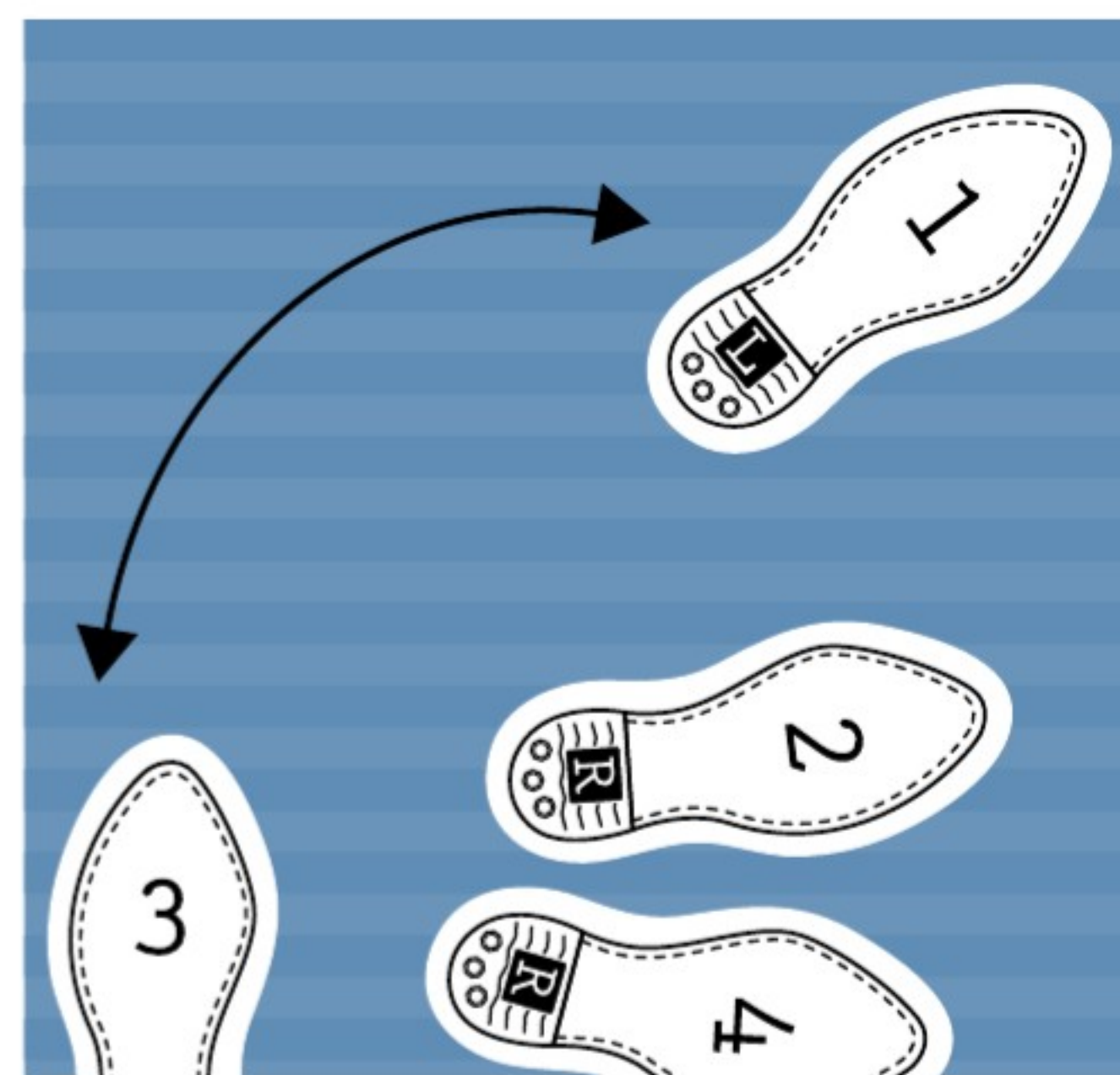
Now, in addition to my weekend life as a mobile DJ, my wife and I rent local catering facilities and provide refreshments...in order to teach line dance classes in the evening, Monday through Thursday, every week. Don't freak out yet! I know some in our business are scared by the very thought. But, notice I didn't mention the word "country" in my job description. This is because most of the dances we do are performed to songs like Gwen Stefani's "Sweet Escape," Gnarl's Barkly's "Crazy," and Justin Timberlake's "Sexyback." (To see a short video of what we do check out www.DancingWithSteveMoody.com)

Keeping the music diverse in this way has proven to bring in a much larger crowd for us. In reality, the days of cowboy hats and boots are pretty much gone in our little world of dancing. In recent years, our weekly events have begun to attract all ages, races, and backgrounds. We average between 800 and 1,000 students every week (depending on the time of year). Which, as you might imagine, brings in a substantial supplemental income.

SSSHHH...IT'S A SECRET!

Though not widely publicized, similar line dance classes are currently being held all across the country. In fact, folks may already be line dancing in your town. A great way to get the scoop on your neck of the woods is to visit sites that feature listings of line dance locations. These listings can be found on sites like www.linedancermagazine.com and www.kickit.to.

Due to line dancing's popularity, there are regular workshops, seminars, and competitions throughout the year, just as in our DJ industry. In addition, the line dancing community has its own list of "big names," featuring internationally



known choreographers, instructors and dancers. There is even a governing body that reigns over the industry, similar to the ballroom dance circuit. The U.C.W.D.C. (<http://ucwdc.org>) is the organization that has created the proper names for the dance steps. It has its own recognized World Champions, and has set rules to judge competitions which have become universally accepted standards.

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY?

At this point you may be thinking "This is all well and good, but what can I do if I can't dance?" Well, here's my big secret. Though I am currently one of the area's leading DJs and dance instructors, in my early years I never taught a step.

Back in the early '90s, I only acted as MC for our dance nights. I was only required to host the event, play the dance music, give away door prizes, and of course, provide the sound system. Someone else did the teaching.

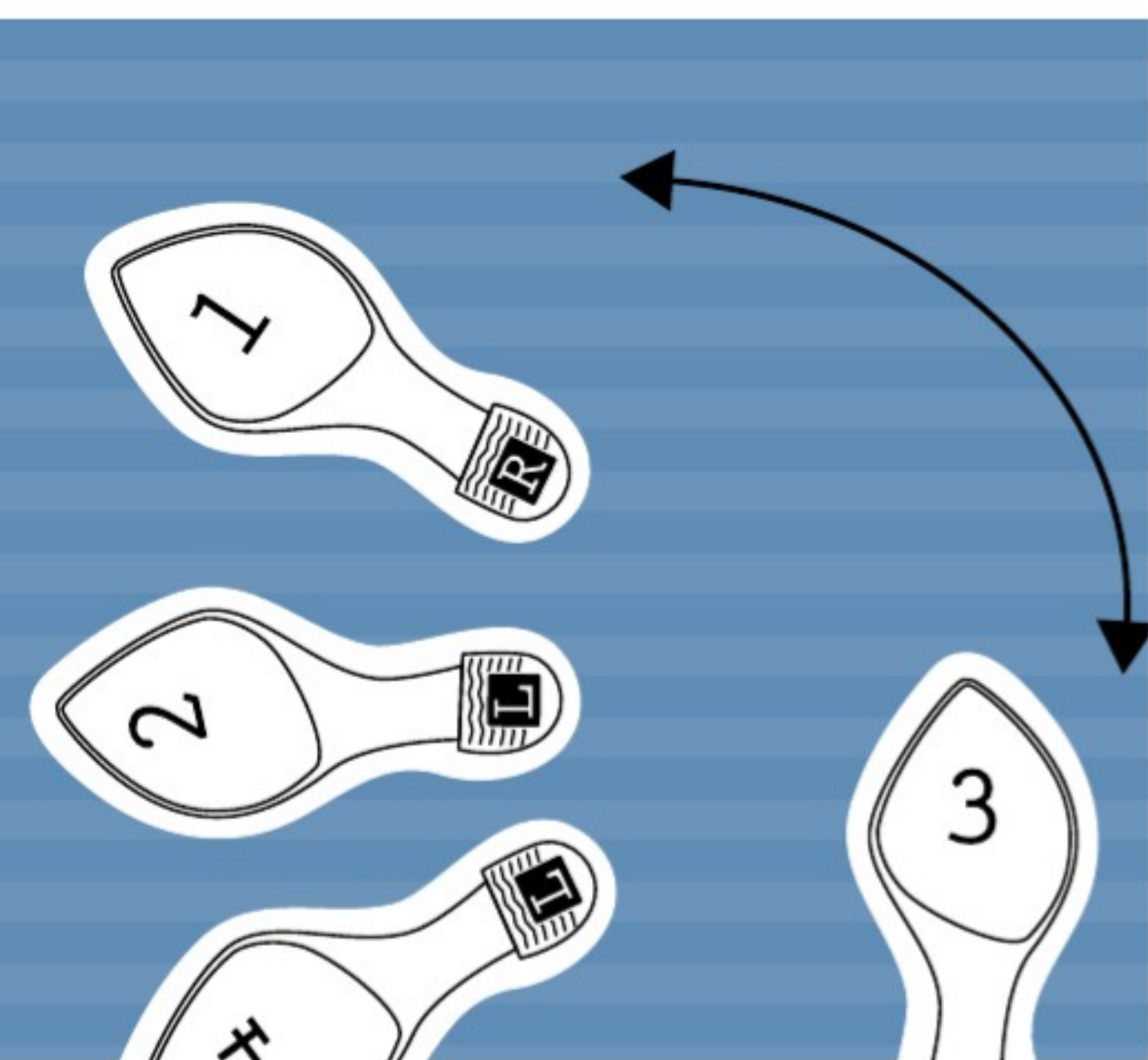
You see, most of the folks teaching these classes are dance instructors, not disc jockeys. They have no formal training in entertainment, and very few have their own sound equipment. By stepping in, and using my abilities as an entertainer, my name became synonymous with line dancing in our region before I ever taught a single dance. So, there is no reason you couldn't be picking up these extra hours of work in your town, no matter what dance experience you might have.

The dance craze is booming across our country, so you wouldn't even have to limit yourself to line dancing. Over the years, I have taught all kinds of dance, including swing, two-step, cha cha, waltz, etc. With the current popularity of television's *Dancing with the Stars*, ballroom dancing is making a huge comeback. On the Latin side, salsa dancing is also huge right now...and the list goes on and on. Now is the time to catch the wave!

DJs who choose to work alone, with no dance experience, could certainly call a local dance instructor and set up a similar partnership on a trial basis. Most of the smaller dance schools have several on staff who would love to earn some extra cash on their "off nights." On the flip side, many larger DJ companies already have knowledgeable dancers on hand. What a

Keeping Business In Line During the Week

A detailed description of how to make dance instruction work as a week-day money-maker—whether or not you're light on your feet.



great way to use your expertise and equipment to make some extra cash during the week. You host the event, and pay the instructor for working with you.

HOW TO HIT THE FLOOR RUNNING

Believe it or not, it is pretty simple to get things moving. You may wish to approach a local catering venue about working out a weekly partnership with them. I have had a similar partnership with a local facility on Wednesday nights for the past nine years. We have a great working relationship, and they even refer me to other private clients.

Another option is to just rent a facility on your own, as I do for my other evenings. This is also a way to make great connections with the venue management. Once your dancers start pouring in, the management can't wait to hire you for private affairs. All facilities love to hire DJs who come with a "following."

Finding the correct venue may be the biggest challenge. I heard a ton of "No's" before finally hearing a "Yes" to our idea. Persistence is essential. In the end, most locations seem to be eager to cut generous deals. With this venture they are able to bring in extra income on a normally "dark night" with no effort on their part. The biggest thing to remember is that line dancing requires a huge dance floor, since everyone is there to dance at the same time. This is essential. The dance floor is everything—it's a dance class, after all.

Before you get going, though, you must take care of the most important consideration: You do have to be licensed and insured if you are going to do this. There is a great organization called the A.C.A. (American Callers Assoc.), which specializes in insurance for line dance instructors. Their standard package also includes ASCAP and BMI coverage, which is a nice bonus. But, to emphasize clearly, insurance is not optional in this case, it is required by law.

TONIGHT'S SCHEDULE OF EVENTS...

Logistically the night is very easy to operate. Our beginner's sessions normally run 16 weeks and teach all of the basics. It is a much shorter evening, since it is billed as a class rather than an actual dance. To get the word out, I usually send out press releases to the local papers several

weeks ahead of time.

Our current beginner session runs on Tuesday nights from 7:00 to 8:30, and has from 100 to 150 participants. Remember now, I live in an extremely small market, so I only charge \$6.00 admission at the door. We tend to have more participants if they don't have to pay "up front" for the entire 16 weeks (especially with the economy being what it is).

We choose to include refreshments in the admission price. Everything is self-serve, from the water cooler to the cups and two-liter bottles of soda. We spend very little money on the refreshments, because participants are on the floor dancing during the entire event. (Picture an aerobic work out at a fitness center.) Halfway through our time together we take a break in order to give away some free admissions as door prizes—and then jump right back into it.

Weekend dance parties feature a bartender with a cash bar, however, our night of lessons is still more an upbeat class than a social dance party. Practically speaking, most folks can't learn if they are intoxicated! Most importantly for us, it makes things much easier not having to worry about obtaining a liquor license to provide these "refreshments" directly.

After setting aside money for the hall rental and snacks, we usually walk away with a nice chunk of change for a very short night's work. Most importantly, we are still home early enough to have some serious "TV time" before heading to bed. You can't beat it!

Running the actual event is not as challenging as you may think. In fact, my wife and I run this night totally by ourselves. Someone from the catering facility opens the doors for us and then we lock up and take the trash out as we leave. We pay the venue in advance, by check, one month at a time. All paper products are picked up from Sams Club or Costco, and sodas are purchased (as they go on sale) at local supermarkets. Easy, breezy!

GETTING STARTED WITH STEPPING

We tend to keep our lessons extremely simple for our beginners. Since many of them have had no previous dance experience, the first week of class I teach three super-easy dances. From then on, we only teach one new dance each night, in addition to reviewing what we learned in previous weeks.

At the end of the session, I congratulate them and invite them to continue dancing in one of our three ongoing nights throughout the week. We take a month off on Tuesday nights, and then start the beginner's session all over again at one of our other locations. This is a great "feeder" to our other classes.

Over the years we have developed a fantastic curriculum for our beginners. Incredibly, there are thousands of line dances that can be found on Kickit.to and other dance websites. That being said, only certain dances are popular in certain regions, so it's good to find out which beginners dances are performed regularly in your area. Most folks want to learn dances that they can go out and perform at other locations.

I can't tell you how many of our weekly dancers have asked me to entertain at their private affairs.

EVEN MORE MONEY TO BE MADE!

Making money from the dance class is just the beginning. DJ services that offer video production may even consider shooting dance instructional DVDs to sell after each class. This goes over very well for us. Participants that are more challenged by the lessons, tend to stick with us if they can purchase a video and then practice at home. Remember, selling the actual music for practice is a "no-no." You may only sell the actual dance lesson unless you have gone through the correct legal channels.

I would also encourage you to get everyone's e-mail address. Our dancers love to get our weekly e-newsletter. It keeps them updated on what we will be teaching, any "open to the public" events that I will be doing, monthly specials we are running, you name it. Additionally, it's a great tool to have for any last minute cancellations due to inclement weather.

THE CIRCLE OF DJ LIFE

Now, before I wrap things up, I want to let you in on one last piece of information. **These weekly regulars potentially provide you with huge opportunities for your DJ business.** I can't tell you how many of our weekly dancers have asked me to entertain at their private affairs. In addition, many of our regulars support me at "open to the public" events like crab feasts, bull roasts, and other types of fundraisers. It's awesome to have your own cheering section at every public event. This is especially true when you work out a paid bonus for each ticket that you sell on your own.

Even if line dancing is not your thing, it is my hope that your time spent reading this has inspired you to think about what else is out there. I can tell you that there is no better feeling than taking your passion to the next level and becoming a full-time entertainer. There is so much potential money to be made; I hope this gets you thinking outside of that box. **MB**

A mobile DJ since 1989, Steve Moody primarily provides entertainment for Maryland's Eastern Shore and the surrounding region. Though you will find him teaching line dancing during the week, his weekends are filled with wedding receptions and anniversary celebrations. Steve has also performed as an on-air radio personality at Baltimore's 93.1 WPOC and as the morning show host at Easton's 96.7 WCEI radio. To see more about what his company does, or to contact Steve, visit www.SteveMoody.com, and www.DancingWithSteveMoody.com.

Get Interactive ...and Get Paid

Unleash your inner game show host and see what happens!

By Rob Johnson

One of the most common questions asked of me is "How did you learn to be so interactive?" The next question is generally "Can anyone do the types of interactive shows that you do?"

Most DJs are Type A personalities and have that "life of the party" attitude. I believe that is the base for getting more interactive midweek shows. Here I am going to touch on how you can start to do more interactive shows which lead to more high paying shows.

Anyone can be a DJ. I say that with tongue firmly in cheek, but look around your market and tell me it's not true, in a way. Anyone with a sound system and music (which we all know is not very hard to get these days) can "be" a DJ. It takes a lot more to be a GOOD DJ, but that is not the point.

Asking for Entertainment

Not everyone wants to be interactive or host trivia parties. Some look at it as "cheese." I am not here to debate what is cheese and what is not. That is something you will have to decide for yourself. I am here to tell you there are events out there that you can book if you want them.

One way of looking at it is that we were all born game show hosts.

We were all born game show hosts. We ask: who, what, when, where and why.

We ask: who, what, when, where and why. This is the first ingredient of hosting a trivia party: You need to be able to ask questions. The fun part comes in knowing what questions to ask and then responding to the answers. If you have ever watched a game show host on TV, you already know they are there to interact with the contestants and the audience. It is the host's job to keep things moving and be entertaining.

I like to make it about the contestants and ask them questions when I bring them on stage. "What do you do for fun?" "What three words best describe you?" "What was your best/worst subject in school?" "What famous celebrity do you wish you were most like, and why?" "On a scale of 1-10 how smart do you think you are?" "Who in the audience are you glad you are not playing against, and why?" And so on. Work their responses into the show. Strive to put your contestants into the limelight. This will bring you respect as a great host. Your personality will set you apart from the competition. A wise man once reminded me to KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE! Make sure your interaction is appropriate for the client. I have an "anything goes" show—and I have a G-rated show.

Can anyone be an interactive and entertaining host? No, but I believe most DJs can! Work with your personality. Don't try to be someone you're not. Comedic timing is something you can develop through experience or also through education. There are classes on improvisation and organizations like Toastmasters to help you work on your public speaking skills.

It all comes down to experience. Get yourself out in front of audiences and try things. You will learn quickly what works and what doesn't. I find it funny that the same companies that beat me up about my price to "DJ" their event don't think twice to hire me for double that rate to "entertain" them with a game show experience. Works for me!

(When you're at MBLV.09 in February, don't forget to stop by the Capri Room and say hi! —Rob J.)

Rob Johnson is the spokesperson and National Representative for DigiGames. Prior to switching to DigiGames two years ago, he used Creative Imagination products for over six years.



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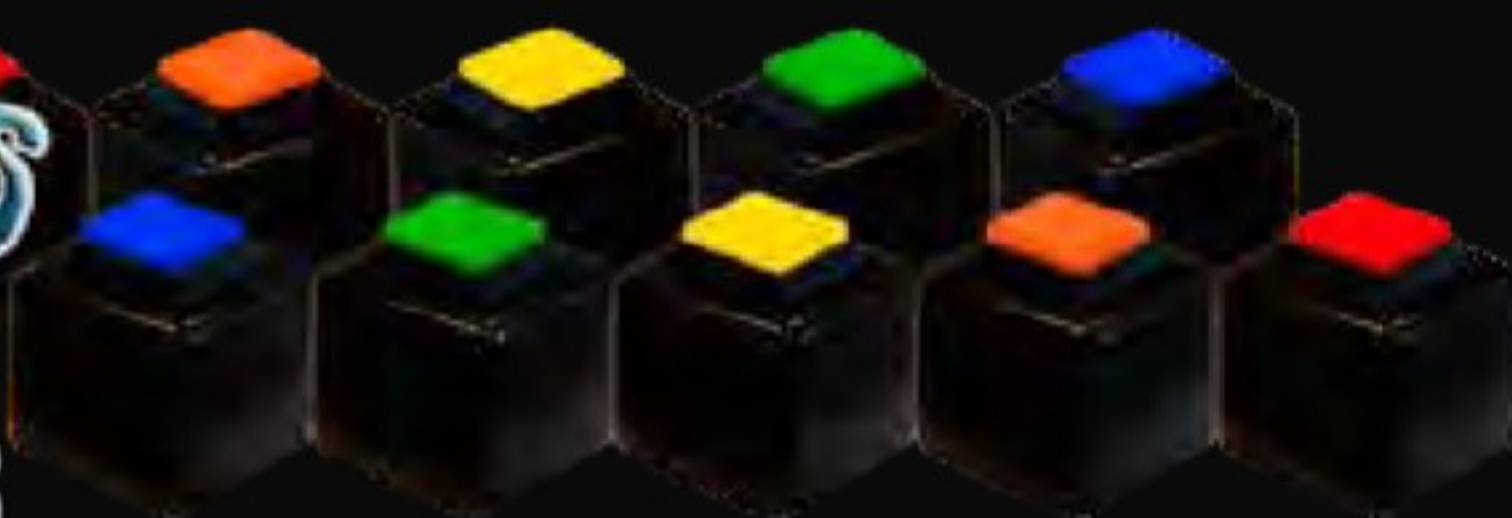
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8 Ways to Increase Your Wedding Business in the New Year

By Andy Ebon, The Wedding Marketing Network

As the calendar turns to 2009, people worldwide will be committing to New Year's resolutions: losing weight, quitting smoking, learning French, spending more time with family, and the like. Resolutions are really no different than business goals. Here is a set of "business resolutions" for you to consider and adopt for 2009:

Beware...

of Economic Forecasts—Positive or Negative: One of the most dangerous habits for the self-employed is being overly influenced by outside circumstances. Suggestions of pessimism or

optimism about the economy should be flatly ignored. Good news is easy to accept, because we like things to be easier. Do not accept bad news. It just rationalizes subpar performance. Don't let your defenses down. Focus on improving your company and a positive outcome will be there.

Demand...

Results and Don't Accept Excuses: Nothing covers up bad decisions like a good economy. When sales are plentiful, profits will always compensate for shortcomings and poor judgment. The same poor decisions will bury you in a more difficult environment.

Just because times are tough, don't make failure too easy to accept. Do not justify weak performance. Compete like there is no tomorrow.

Focus...

on Enhancing Existing Business Relationships: New customers are always important. However, your primary job should be to maintain and solidify your present customer/contact base. Does your company have an ongoing customer communication and appreciation strategy? You know the degree of difficulty, length of time, and cost of building a new business relationship. By systematically redefining and fortifying key relationships, you assure an ongoing flow of business.

Be Unique...

by Being the Purple Cow: Seth Godin's book, *Purple Cow*, redefined the concept of the "Unique Selling Proposition" for the 21st Century. In simple terms, what makes your company remarkable? How is it exceptional and worthy of comment? What makes your company "rare" in the eyes of your customers. Touting "great customer service" is not unique.

Communicate...

the Way Your Customers Do: Text messaging, cell phones, Facebook, video in multiple formats, MySpace, an up-to-date website, and many more. If you are not current, your competitors will leave you in the dust. Be speedy, efficient, and up to date.

Be Generous

A key way to setting your company apart and attracting new business is to be generous with your expertise. Often, one worries about getting paid, too soon. Until a prospect understands the level of your expertise, choosing one vendor over another is still just a matter of price. The goal should be to have prospects and customers understand and value your expertise. When this magic moment is achieved, a relationship has begun.

Change...

with the Times: Do not kid yourself. Just because you tried something in the past that succeeded or failed, don't assume that if you repeat the exercise you will get the same result. Use "Zero-Base Thinking" and plan anew. The world is changing at such a staggering rate that relying blindly on yesterday's assumptions is a dangerous practice.

Expand your knowledge and expertise. Don't just operate in the vacuum of your business. It is only with exposure to fresh ideas, techniques and strategies that you can continue to have a business edge and vitality.

Embrace...

Technology: You don't drive a horse and buggy, do you? I didn't think so. Bottom line: The need for speed and ease in communication, information management, sales presentation and sales completion is paramount. If you don't have a program to constantly evaluate and upgrade your company's use of technology and communication, then you will be left in the dust. Technology does not replace you. It is simply a tool. Make certain you have the right tools to compete.

THE FINAL WORD

Get fired up! Don't accept mediocrity. Make a plan and break some new ground. Don't be afraid to take chances. In the words of management guru, Tom Peters, "Make your mistakes quickly." Break out...and watch your competition in the rear view mirror. **ME**

Andy Ebon operates EBS Virtual Communications, a Las Vegas-based sales/marketing strategy and website development company. Now in its second decade, EBS has provided Internet and other electronic marketing solutions for companies involved in Hospitality, Entertainment, Weddings and General Business, and also Associations. Focusing in on brides and grooms, in 2007 Andy launched The Wedding Marketing Network (www.WeddingMarketing.net), which includes The Wedding Marketing Blog (www.WeddingMarketing.biz).

Bonus Tip from Andy Ebon

Don't be locked into an inflexible budget. Set aside some funds for "spontaneous wedding marketing." E-mail marketing may be inexpensive, but some old school postcards should be included in your marketing mix as well. Consider the full range of possibilities, develop your plan, and execute.

"We Help DJs Build
and Grow their
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AMERICAN DISC JOCKEY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 1 • JANUARY 2009



TRAINING TO ENTERTAIN

By Mike Walter

A few years ago, when I turned 39 years old, instead of celebrating my birthday, I decided I had to do something BIG in the next 12 months.

Something to mark my 40th. What I decided to do was take something that I had always thought about doing, one of those vague futuristic ideas that I might wanna do someday, and I make it a GOAL.

I decided to run a marathon.

In the Long Run...

I found a "beginners" training program online, followed it to a T, and prepared for my first marathon in November of 2005. Training wasn't a breeze but I never struggled through any long runs or sustained any noticeable injuries. On the day of the race I felt great and I ran well until about mile 16. I struggled over the final 10 miles, and though I did finish the race, I was disappointed in my time (5:10). I decided I could do better, so I signed up for another marathon.

This time around I followed a tougher training program. It featured weekly hill runs (something that had been lacking in the beginners training program). I suffered through this training. I had some horrible long runs including an 18-miler in 25-degree weather, which I couldn't finish and wound

up hitchhiking home for fear of getting hypothermia. I thought about quitting at one point because for two weeks my training runs were horrible. The hill work especially was killing me!

Then, about a month before the marathon, I read an article in Runners World magazine and the author said something that stuck with me. He wrote: "You don't train to be good in training, you train to be good in the race."

With that in mind, I finished my training, still feeling much worse than I had, leading up to my first marathon. But I went out and shaved 30 minutes off my first marathon time, going from 5:10 to 4:40. Since then, I have taken on harder and harder training programs. They include speed work, hill work, cross training and of course watching my nutrition. I have set a long term goal of running a marathon in every state. (By the end of 2008 I will have run in twelve states, so I have a long way to go!) I have lowered my personal record to 3:49 and just recently I completed two marathons in three weeks.

These days I live by that quote: "You don't train to be good in training, you train to be good in the race"--because I often have bad days in training. I often fail to finish a run or fall apart halfway through my track work and miss my goal speeds. But I keep at it and work harder knowing that it will make me better come race day.

I have also come to realize that this nugget of wisdom relates to what we do as mobile DJs as well.

Training for the Entertainment Race

Do you rehearse? Do you practice? Do you train yourself to be the best possible mobile DJ you can be?

When you hear a new dance song and you know you are going to start working it into your repertoire, do you

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Training to Entertain

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practice mixing it? If you have editing software, do you recreate the song if need be, so it has a smooth intro and a perfect break to use as an outro?

Before your bridal party Introductions, do you recite the names out loud? Do you say the tougher names over and over so that your mouth gets used to pronouncing sounds it's not used to making? If you work with an assistant who will be mixing music while you speak, do you rehearse with that person to work out the timing?

If a client gives you an extensive music list, do you analyze it before the event, maybe even re-writing it so it has some sense of order during the gig?

When you learn a new game, do you play it with your family members or friends before you bust it out live at an event? Do you work out the kinks involved in setting up the game?

If you want to incorporate a new line dance into your show, do you practice, not only doing the dance but also

teaching the steps to people who don't know it?

When you buy a new piece of equipment, do you set it up and break it down a few times to make sure you know the ins and outs of putting it together, operating it and packing it up correctly?

In my opinion, if you call yourself a "Professional Mobile DJ" your answer should be "YES" to all of the above. These are all forms of practice, or rehearsal, or you can even call them training. It's all the same thing really.

And remember, you don't train to be good at training. You train to

Make all the mistakes you want to in rehearsal. And be happy you did.



be good at the event. If you mispronounce a tough name while you are rehearsing you should be thrilled! Mispronounce it again and again! Just get it right eventually before you go live with it. Then feel good about the fact that you nailed it live because if you hadn't rehearsed then the first time you pronounced that name would have been in front of everyone on the mic and you would have butchered it right then and there just like you did the first time in rehearsal. The same thing goes for a horrible mix in rehearsal, or showing a new game to your staff and forgetting one of the key rules to making the game work. Make all the mistakes you want to in rehearsal. And be happy you did. Because you're not practicing to be good at practicing. You are practicing to good at the event. 🎯

"Wetting" a Client's Entertainment Appetite

By Scott Faver

Engage the client at least 7 times to make an impact.



Sometimes it's all about the drip. A marketing drip that is.

When a client calls, ideally you want to schedule an appointment. But often clients want to take it one step at a time. So, collect as much contact information as they are willing to share. Then be prepared to send them something via mail, email, fax... And not just one item but lots of stuff. Not all at once, of course, but a bit, drip, at a time.



Each marketing piece should stand alone, on its own merits, but layer ideas about your services and entice them to call back and schedule an appointment with you. Our tagline is "You have the dream... We make it happen!" Dream is the emotional word. Facts tell, emotions sell. So we use a D.R.E.A.M. acronym.

Dramatic, Romance, Emotion, Ambiance, Memorable. We have an

Email and Mail drip

THE MASTER'S SERIES

campaign that covers benefits and features of our services based on each of these ideas: how we can make their reception dramatic, how we assure that their first dance is filled with romance, and so on.

This D.R.E.A.M. drip campaign is separate from, and in addition to, our regular welcome package, which outlines our rates, references and services. The plan is to touch the client with your company's name, image, and ideas at least seven times to make an impact that sells.

Lots of work? Yes, but well worth it. While most companies lose interest after the first or second call back, or piece of mail, your clients will recognize your interest in their business and appreciate your follow up and follow through! 🎯

Contact Scott Faver, The Game Master & Infotainment Expert at www.ThePartyFavers.com and Scott@ThePartyFavers.com



The End of Affluence? Puh-lease!

By Jim Cerone

"This is the worst economic crisis in 100 years!"

"It's the end of affluence in America!"

"The sky is falling!"

Give me a break. Are you kidding me? Take a long, critical look around. What do you see? Let me help. What you see is unbridled abundance.

Compared to our grandparents and great-grandparents, we live in the midst of ridiculous excess and we are incredibly wasteful.

Do we even know the meaning of "essentials?" While traveling to a DJ conference recently, I was struck by the ubiquitous cell phone, which has weaseled its way into every waking moment of our lives. My seat-mate on the flight literally talked until the moment the forward door slammed shut. Then, she twitched nervously until the wheels touched down. In the gate area, I half expected hand-to-hand combat for the electrical outlets.

Can we really even imagine how our ancestors lived? Could you survive having twelve people in one house sharing one bathroom? Ladies and gentlemen, I'm here to tell you that we have no idea how to sacrifice or go without.

Do any of us need 100 channels of cable television, three cars, four bedrooms, 3000 square feet and five different salad dressings? Has your cupboard every really been bare? How many beverages does one family need? If you're like us, you have bottled water, milk, three different kinds of juice (including juice boxes), coffee, tea and soda. Heck, how many refrigerators do you have? Does it make any sense to pay for the electricity to run the one in the garage

or basement when it's almost always completely empty?

Here's my catch phrase to get us through this economic "downturn:" WWGGD. What would your great-grandmother do?

Great-grandma could feed the entire extended family on a few bucks a week.

Forget adjusting for inflation, by the way. Numbers don't mean anything. We're talking about a mindset. You want to adjust something? Adjust our entire collective attitude. We feel "entitled" to everything. Let's face the ugly truth—we are all spoiled brats!

Want to solve your own personal economic dilemma? Cancel your cable, satellite, movie subscriptions, cell phones, internet, and sell a car or



abundant times. To suggest that we are headed for economic collapse is downright comical and even more, it's irresponsible.

What about retirement plans and college funds? If we lived within our means and didn't rack up debt in the prime of our life, we'd have money for our golden years. Or, heaven forbid, we'd do what our grandparents did: work hard and then be taken care of by our children and grandchildren. Pass on the wisdom from our generation to theirs. Teach them a trade. Fancy book learnin' ain't all it's cracked up to be. We need a lot more plain old common sense.

We've been on one long consumption binge that may finally come to a halt. In my best Stuart Smalley voice, "That's okay. Because we're good enough and we're smart enough and gosh darn it, all we really need is to eat

Here's my catch phrase to get us through this economic "downturn"... WWGGD. What would your great-grandmother do?

two. Let your lawn grow naturally and pick weeds by hand. Shovel snow. Rake leaves. Learn to use a broom. Tired of high gas prices? Carpool, ride a bike, walk or--gasp--take public transportation! My grandfather rode three different buses to get to his job in the 1930s.

Our grandparents fixed things. Us? It breaks, we throw it away. Does anyone know how to darn socks anymore? Will our granite countertops keep us warm when the weather turns cold? If we had any shame, we'd be ashamed, but we've learned to block all that out.

I'm not some new age guru who wants you to sell all your possessions and go sit on a mountaintop. I am pointing out that we live in amazingly

and sleep for goodness sake."

Essentials? Food and shelter, boys and girls. That's all we need. What we need is more family time and fewer gadgets. What we need is good health and less medication. Unplug. Take a walk. Breathe in some air.

We are unbelievably rich and fortunate. We're going get through this with no problem. Oh, sure, we may have to learn to live with less stuff, but that's going to be good for all of us. 🍀



HAVE YOU EVER HIRED A PROFESSIONAL?

By Peter Merry

In our line of work, we often present ourselves to our clients as a trusted “professional” who can be counted on to make them look good on their wedding day, at their corporate event, at their school dance, etc. Yet how many of us have ever hired a professional to make us look good?

I’m not talking about hiring a professional image consultant to give you a new hair-do and a complete wardrobe make-over (although many of us could probably use that kind of help). And I’m not talking about hiring a professional set designer to help us create a new look for our equip-



ment (although many of us most certainly could use this kind of help as well.) And I’m also not talking about hiring a professional photographer to take current headshots instead of continuing to use the same one from 10 years ago...when you still had hair...or when it was at least a darker color than it is now.

What I am talking about is hiring a professional graphic artist to create a new logo and design fresh, new marketing materials for your business cards, letterhead, and even your web site.

Knowing the True Value of Your Image

Does your current logo date back to the last century? Has your web site been updated within the last half-decade? Are your business cards more than three years old? And who designed them for you?

Why do you expect your clients to trust you with carrying over 80% of the responsibility for the success of their special events? Is it because you are good at what you do? Is it because you have a proven track record of creating fun and memorable events? Is it because you have invested in yourself by taking performance

oriented workshops in an effort to improve your skills and talents? I’m going to take a shot in the dark and guess your answer to these questions is “yes.”

Yet, I’d wager that if we were all surveyed, we’d discover that 95% of us or more have no formal training or experience as graphic artists. And I’d be willing to place an even bigger bet that of those 95%, more than 3/4 of them created their own logos, their own marketing materials, and their own web sites.

Many in our line of work have complained about the large number of low-cost, inexperienced DJs who keep flooding our markets every year. Many of them may point to YouTube videos as their only source of training as entertainers. They are often blamed for lowering the bar of achievement, lowering client expectations, and even lowering the average achievable pay scale. Many often wonder why clients would ever hire such unqualified individuals for their special events. But how does graphic design really relate to our image in the eyes of potential clients? The truth is that our logos, our marketing materials, and our web sites say an awful lot about us to the general public. Based on the vast majority of examples I have personally seen over the last decade, the messages we have been sending are as follows:

1. Everyone is an instant “professional”...so any DJ will do.
2. Shoddy logos and low grade marketing materials show how little value we place on our image.
3. DJs are cheap and cannot afford a high-quality look, so they probably don’t charge very much.
4. Homemade web sites scream that this is just a hobby and we are not serious business people.

If a wedding client were to tell you that they were considering using an iPod

or having the bride’s 16-year-old cousin play the music at the reception, what


would you say to show them that your services were a much better investment in the overall success of their celebration?

In much the same way, when you choose to “save money” by using a do-it-yourself approach on your logo, your marketing materials, and your web site, the results will be just as dramatically different as the results an iPod can

deliver compared to your full entertainment services.

By paying more now for a professional artist to help improve your marketing image, you will see better results over time that will equal more profits in return. When you invest in your own success by hiring someone who is a professional graphic artist, you will send the following messages to your prospective clients:

1. You not only claim to be a professional, but you look like a professional as well.
2. You place a high value on your image, as well as on the success of your client’s special events.
3. You are willing to invest in yourself—and your clients will get even more if they invest in you.
4. This is (or soon will be) your chosen profession and you are a serious business person.

If your clients hire you with the expectation that you will make them look good in return...then consider hiring a professional graphic artist to make you look even better. You’ll not only be helping yourself—you’ll be helping our entire industry as well. 

By hiring a professional graphic artist, you will send the message to your prospective clients that you are willing to invest in yourself –and your clients will get even more if they invest in you.



Taking the "C" Out of Ceremony

DJ IDEA SHARING

By Mike Fernino

Ceremony begins with the letter C. As a grade, the letter C means an average score--and most DJs get an average mark when it comes to their ceremony services. Here is how to take your ceremony grade from C to A.

The business of wedding ceremonies has grown tremendously in the past five years. My company has seen a growth of 50% in that same five-year period. One out of every four wedding clients hires us to provide complete sound and music service for their ceremony. This number is still growing. Why are we seeing so much growth in the ceremony field? Let's take a look...

Expanding Service Opportunities

First, most of the blame has to fall on churches. Many churches will not be flexible with their brides and grooms, and will not bend on hours of accommodation. Brides do not want four hours in between their ceremony and their reception. The other reason can be directly traced to wedding facilities embracing the ceremony market and creating spectacular settings for these events. Many facilities have separate ceremony grounds. In my area of the country, we even see wedding facilities building chapels to bring the religious element right to their door step.

Truly, the word "convenience" is the number one selling point with the modern bride and groom. Remember, this is the fast food and internet generation we are dealing with now.

With the exodus of ceremonies from the church come great opportunities and increased business for DJs. The only problem is that most DJs try to approach a ceremony as a DJ.

This is a Big Mistake, and here is why.

Taking Ceremony Sound Seriously

In my humble opinion, too many entertainers sell themselves as DJs for the ceremony. They are more than happy to plop down a laptop and speaker and call it a day. Other DJs use their backup equipment, which is usually is a mini system. Though convenient, these approaches sell your clients short of what you really should offer: professional sound reinforcement. My recommendation? Instead of selling yourself as a DJ trying to do a ceremony, become a "sound specialist" and approach the ceremony as if you were an engineer. This will require a change in the equipment you use.

Let's begin with your rig. At my company, we use a dedicated ceremony system, which is not a DJ system. This rig has a 12-channel sound board with four wireless microphone set ups and a hard drive system with CD. It is totally portable, but substantial and flexible in nature, which gives us the ability to provide wireless microphones for the officiant, readers, and even live musicians. We have also added a transmitter to this system to allow for wireless speaker capability, so we are no longer hindered by cables. Speaker placement can be very crucial, especially when a ceremony is outside. The microphones

that you use are also very important. Many ministers or JPs refuse to hold a mic in hand, and an ugly boom stand should not be in the bride's wedding pictures. A lavalier microphone is the solution to this dilemma, allowing us to simply clip it on the speaker's clothing, leaving both hands free. Another great resource can be a shotgun microphone, which allows

the DJ to stand up to 30 feet away from their subject and aim it directly at them for pinpoint coverage of the vows, without putting a mic on the speaker.

If you sell yourself as a professional, an expert sound engineer for the ceremony, you will be more valuable than the DJ down the street who casually says, "OK, I'll just throw a speaker outside."

By the way, don't ever do that! You must approach a ceremony with a sepa-

rate sound system if the event is in a different room than the reception.

Most of our ceremonies are outside, unless it rains. I have seen DJs do a ceremony, and then break down their system only to run inside and reset. This is NOT the image that a professional should portray to the guests. Why would you ever want that kind of pressure




anyway? In most cases, we take our ceremony system and break it down after cocktail hour, while our main DJ system is neatly ready for the reception.

Live and On Location

Live music is also a very large and growing phenomenon in my area. More and more weddings are booking live music. DJs usually look at a ceremony as either DJ or live music. If this is your view, you are missing out on a boat load of revenue! Even if the bride and groom book live music, who is going to provide sound for the JP, toasts, or other speakers? How will the guests hear the live music if the ceremony is outside on a beach? Talk with your clients and explain that ceremony live music is only part of the equation.

Finally, with so many ceremonies taking place on beaches or in remote locations, we have relied on external power supplies to emancipate us from power outlets. There are several systems on the market that provide portable power, allowing us to move to the ceremony, rather than being far away from the action. This has really come into play when my clients have a beach front or remote event. And yes, you can and should charge for this convenient service. Remote systems add an extra \$100 to our ceremony fees.

Sound is the key to the guests hearing or not hearing most of the ceremony--so let them know it! Don't miss the opportunity to up-sell your sound services and increase your income from the wedding gig. For your ceremony service, become a sound engineer and don't casually approach your next event as "just a DJ adding a speaker." You will get an A from your clients! 

For your ceremony service, become a sound engineer...don't casually approach your next event as "just a DJ adding a speaker."

Sales Success: G to I

By Mitch Taylor

Last issue we discussed **D, E and F** of Sales Success. This month we continue with **G, H and I...**

G = Give Freely

What does giving have to do with sales success? As the old saying goes, that we hear all of the time around the holidays, "It's better to give than to receive."

The beauty of this in the sales cycle is that when you give, you almost always receive exponentially back. There are several local networking associations nationwide such as BNI (www.bni.com) or organizations that are wedding and event-focused such as ABC (www.bridalassn.com) and NACE (www.nace.net) where you can increase your network of referrals and hopefully increase your bottom line through word of mouth. To give freely also means you should donate whenever possible...it makes you feel good to do so. And that can only be good for your health, mentally and otherwise.



H = Hug Your Clients


In Mark Ferrell's industry-changing message "Getting What You're Worth," he spoke of the fact that he hugs his clients. I can still hear the chuckles in the room from my audio CD copy of this seminar when he said that. Do you hug your clients? Let's explore this. What is hugging? Hugging is a form of communication. What does it communicate? It communicates that you care. This one word goes to the heart of sales success. Do you establish a relationship with your clients? After the event is over, do they ever hear from you again? Or is your sales cycle similar to one of a venue I worked at in metro Detroit several years ago when the hall manager informed me upon my asking if the client could have overtime that evening

SALES SUCCESS FROM A TO Z

that once this wedding was done, it was done and she had another one in there tomorrow morning. Something tells me she didn't hug her clients. She was only looking at this bride and groom as a means to an end--the end of the night so she could go home and her paycheck. Truly care for your clients. It makes a world of difference.

I = Invest in Yourself

This may sound simplistic, but it really is profound. In regards to sales success, there are several ways to invest in you. What's important to discover is what will truly generate referrals and make your phone ring in the days and weeks after your performance at last week-end's event. What will clients beg for, demand and truly desire in entertainment for their event? Answer this question and you will know where to invest in yourself. For some, it's sales training or studying books by the likes of Zig Ziglar, Bryan Dodge, Harry Beckwith and Jeffrey Gitomer (one of my personal favorites). For others it will be performance-oriented workshops such as improv, acting classes, or Toastmasters, which will improve your skills tremendously and help you create demand. Find what works for you and your business, and invest wisely.

Thanks for reading. I'll be back next time with J, K and L in the alphabet of Sales Success. 

Do you establish a relationship with your clients? After the event is over, do they ever hear from you again?

"But..."

By Mark Imperial

If you attend a meeting of farmers and someone gets up and explains a foolproof process he created to sell apples, inevitably there will be a guy in the room that says, "This won't work for me because I sell oranges!"

A popular, but inaccurate mindset is that somehow "my customer is different, or this bride is different" or "my customer is too sophisticated; they need flashy marketing with highfalutin vocabulary."

Does Your Customer Levitate?

Your customer is a human who puts their pants on in the morning same as the rest of us--one leg at a time (or the rare both legs at the end of the bed person). Additionally, they don't want to read boring books, watch boring programs, or listen to boring audios.

No matter what kind of marketing you are writing--an ad, an email, a letter, or whatever--you'd better write like you talk (or would like to talk). And no, most of us don't talk like we are reading a dictionary or thesaurus.

Try thinking: "Corporations don't buy my services...people buy my services."

Understand Who You Are Writing To

An exercise I teach is to write to your own "Betty." Get out a piece of paper and let me explain...

I use "Betty" for example, as in "Betty Bride." Start with looking into your own past client list and pick out your best customers, the ones you would like to get more of. Then, de-



My Customer Is Different!"

scribe your best Betty Bride as thoroughly as possible. What does her day look like? Her week? Where does she shop? What does she read? Then, write a letter to that person like you know her as a friend. The deeper the connection you make with your prospect, the higher the response and the bigger the booking.

If you are sending plain vanilla messages out to the world, you may as well keep your money, because otherwise you're throwing it away. The riches are in niches.

You Can Have as Many Niches as You Want

Make a list of all the niches you would like to market to, starting with your own in-house list, isolating your most profitable and favorite types of clients. Then, find other niches you would like to approach, where people are currently purchasing DJ services. Follow the money. If you discover that Pot Belly Pig Breeders are hiring DJs every month, then you re-search them and write to them. All of these individual niches can co-exist without one knowing about the other. Market to them via separate websites and send them different mailings. (In other words, don't let your brides see your Pot Belly Pig marketing.) 



Mark Imperial is a leading authority on marketing, sales presentation, and performance for the mobile DJ industry. From Chicago, he is a popular entertainer for some of the world's most famous brands including Nintendo and Under Armour. He is also the author and creator of *The DJs Edge Marketing System: The Most Powerful Strategies Ever Created For DJ Entertainers*. For more information and a FREE Marketing Course, visit www.DJsEdge.com/ADJA.

CUEING UP AN INTRO TO BEATMIXING

IN THE MIX

By Brian Harris

Welcome to "In The Mix," a new column dealing with beatmixing.

My name is Brian Harris, and I have been a wedding MC/DJ since 1997. But I have been a drummer for much longer than that (since I was 3!). So, my approach to beatmixing is very much from the drummer's perspective, looking closely at rhythm as the driving force of dance music. At the end of each article, I will finish up with a song mix suggestion, a secret weapon from my musical arsenal. Let's begin...

Pulse. Beat. Rhythm. Pattern

These words describe what people dance to, and what they feel, in order to move their bodies naturally to the music.

BPM (Beats Per Minute) is the tempo or speed of the song. If that suddenly changes, the dancers must stop, feel the new tempo, and start dancing again. Sometimes that can kill your dance floor. But what if we keep that pulse moving not only consistently, but also gradually increasing in BPM throughout a set of songs? Not only are we creating more energy as we go from song to song, but now we are not giving our dancers a reason to stop dancing, because the "pulse" never stops. Dead air between songs? Don't even get me started on that!

Will beatmixing make or break your dance floor? Certainly not. You could beatmix with perfection all night long. But if you're not playing the right genre of music for the audience in front of you, then beatmixing is a moot point. However, you could not mix all night long, but play the right songs, and your dance floor stays packed all night. Beatmixing is simply a tool you can use to enhance that successful ordering of songs by making the transition from one



to the next as smooth as possible.


Playing the right songs in an order that is favorable to creating a feel-good atmosphere is imperative if you want the dancing to continue all night.

Once you use your transitioning talents to get them out there after all the formalities, you've got to keep them out there! Beatmixing is one way to keep them dancing!

Most importantly, you must be able to read your audience, and adjust accordingly to what they are enjoying and responding to most. Sometimes that means playing more slow songs if the crowd is older, and/or a more laid back type of group.

I will now leave you with a simple mix to try at your next event!

Celebration (120 BPM). Then on beat 4, mix in Boogie Shoes (119.5 BPM - make sure you match it to 120 BPM). Throughout the duration of Boogie Shoes, slowly raise the BPM to 123 and mix into Don't Stop the Music (123 BPM) which comes in on beat 3. Here we went from a fun "feel-good" 1980 hit, into a 1975 disco hit, and finally into a hit track from 2007, covering 3 different eras/genres, all the while building energy and making it nearly impossible for someone to stop dancing!

In the next issue, I will discuss the different type of musical notes you need to be familiar with when beatmixing, and I'll help you better understand how to count them, even if you're not a musician! 

Brian is the owner of Brian Harris Entertainment in Dayton, OH and can be reached at info@BrianHarrisEntertainment.com.



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READERS ARE LEADERS

By Bryan Dodge

Some people appreciate the value of continuing education. However, most people never bother to continue learning throughout their adult lives.

We can never quantify or recover these lost opportunities. If you want to become a better person and achieve The Good Life, you must understand the importance of learning. Learn how to work harder on yourself than you do on your job and your job will begin working for you. Answer this question: "Do you have the willingness and the discipline to be a reader?"

One of the best ways to learn something new is to read a book.

Yet, according to syndicated newspaper columnist Harvey Mackay, "51 percent of the American population never reads a book of more than 400 pages after they complete their formal education." Most American workers don't read four books during their lifetime! In contrast, some Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) I know read four books a week. These leaders commit themselves to continually learning as a part of their strategy for The Good Life. They also understand the real power of reading.

Can a book change a life?

Absolutely! If you buy the book yourself and only keep it for yourself, then you miss the real point of reading. How many books have you given away this year? If

the answer is none and you are in the "people business," what are you thinking? Go back to building the people around you, and they will help your dreams become a reality. Many people tell me they don't have the time to read. It's simply not true. You have to make time.

If you read one book a month for 12 months, you would be in the top 25 percent of all intellectuals in the world. Does that sound impossible? One book per month is about half a chapter a day, which might



discipline to do it. I'd encourage you to set a realistic and achievable goal of reading at least 15 minutes every day and over a year you can complete an average of 20 books. If you devote this time to learning and sharing, it will separate you from your competitors who are also pursuing the next opportunity.


Remember, the more you learn, the more you will be able to earn. Don't go through a single day without learning something new. This brings me to the very reason I chose to talk about reading and books this month.

A life-long dream of mine has now become a reality. This wouldn't have happened to me and my family if it weren't

for all the support that you have given to me over all these years. I have to be completely honest with all of

The more you learn, the more you will be able to earn.

you—I am truly nervous and very excited at the same time, in a way I have not felt for a long time. This is the type of nervousness that comes with the first date, the big game, etc.

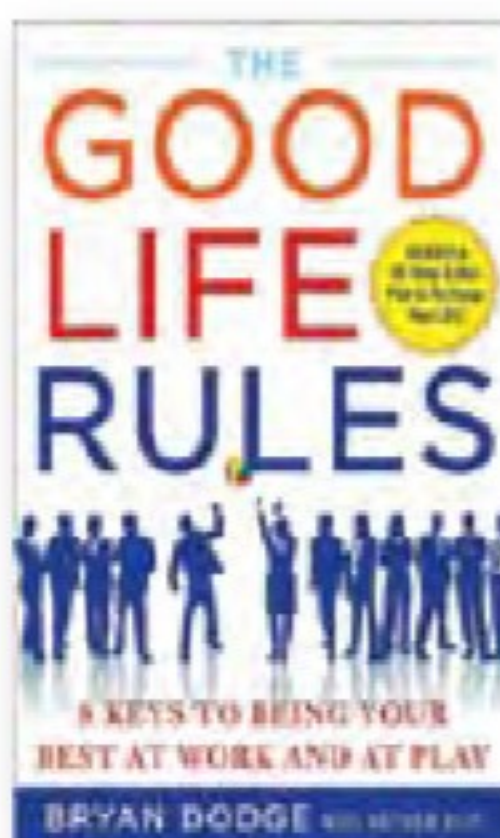
What's the big news? My new book, *The Good Life Rules*, published by McGraw-Hill, is now available in bookstores, and online at Amazon.com and other sites. I hope you will e-mail me your thoughts regarding the book at bryan@bryandodge.com. Thanks for all your support. I truly wish each of you the best that life has to offer, both for you and for those who depend on you. 

take fifteen minutes of your time. Think about it. If you read one book a month for one year, you will have read 12 books related to your chosen field. In five years, you will have read 60 books. If you read

60 books when your competitors for the same job read three books, don't you think you will have an advantage?

When it comes to reading, your challenge isn't actually finding the time to read. Your challenge is creating personal

The Good Life Rules!



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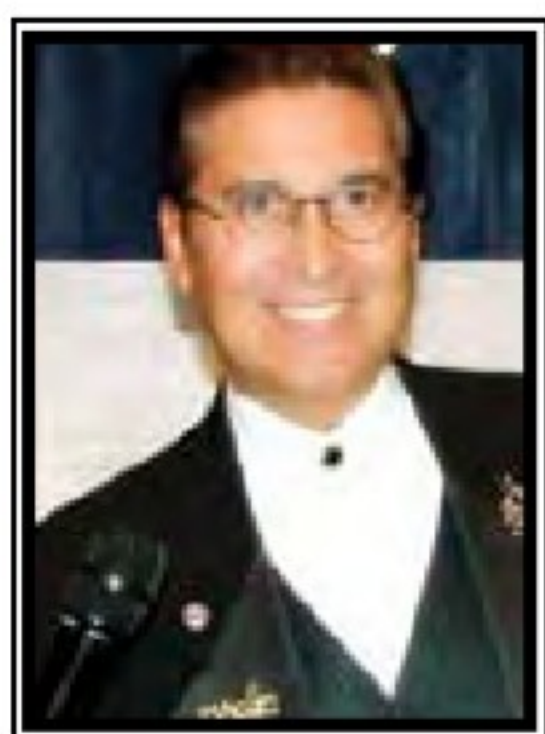


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Refreshing New Year's Resolutions

How to help your good intentions evolve into real goals

By Paul Kida, The DJ Coach

Ah, yes, my fellow DJs, it is that time again...a new year begins. With it, we all (or most of us) get caught up in the annual tradition of making New Year's resolutions. Isn't it a great idea to start the brand new year off with a fresh outlook, changing our lives for the better?

Or is it? The main problem with it is that most of us end up failing miserably at keeping these resolutions! We all tend to sink back into our old, non-productive patterns, which makes us feel depressed because once again, we have not lived up to what is expected of us, this time by ourselves. **Well, stop it right now!**

OK, if you really want to change old habits and feel that you must keep up the tradition of having New Year's resolutions, fear not; you can have your resolutions, but this year be assured that you will succeed in keeping them!

ACTION WORD

Let's first examine the word "resolution." According to the dictionary, it means: a determined intention; solving of a problem; and in the case of vision, it means clarity and sharpness. Coming from the base word "resolute" it also has the connotation of being purposeful, decided



Good intentions, even determined intentions, are only as good as the action that follows.

and firm. Just meditate for a moment on these descriptive words. Let their meaning sink in. Can resolutions really be helpful? Absolutely! But that is only the beginning of a successful journey. Good intentions, even determined intentions, are only as good as the action that follows.

If you take a close look at the word resolution, you will find the base word of "solution." The definition of solution is the **act** of solving a problem. Here is our next step to overcoming failure in keeping our New Year's resolutions. We need to take positive action, not merely day-dream or say we will do something. We need to look for actual solutions to our problems, following through with the works that will lead to a definite result.

THE WRITE STUFF

How do we go about taking that positive action? What is it that will help us in finding success that we so desire? It is the simple act of setting goals **in writing**. That means writing down in detail what it is we wish to accomplish. Then write down in detail the actions or steps that would be necessary in order to get them done. This makes

these goals real and alive to us. Following this method will turn your resolutions into something much more than just the annual fad. It will become the starting point for real, positive change. Now let's see how we can do this without overwhelming ourselves in the process.

First of all, don't go crazy in making more resolutions than you can keep. Keep it simple! You might want to start by looking at the three most important aspects of your life. Those would be, first of all, personal/family; secondly, business aspects; and finally, your actual job performance as a mobile entertainer.

Write down your resolutions under each category, limiting it to five or six per category. Next, you want to narrow that down to the three most important per category, leaving you with a total of nine New Year's resolutions. Even that seems like a lot, so let's narrow it down even further by choosing the most important resolution for each category.

You now have one personal resolution (maybe losing weight, working on some relationship, etc.), one business resolution (perhaps making more appointments, following up on more



leads, etc.) and one job performance resolution (maybe improving your MC capabilities, etc.).

STEP BY STEP

It is time to move on to the second stage of solutions. Exactly what will it take to get these resolutions fulfilled? Are they reasonable? Take the time to examine each one and find the most effective way for you to get it done.

Let's look at the sample resolutions that are stated above. Number one is "lose weight." What will that take? Some logical solutions would be to eat healthier, no fast food, make better choices. Or will it take joining a weight loss group? Will you have the time to make it to the meetings? You know your schedule and what is logical for you personally.

The second example is "make more appointments." What will that take? Most likely, calling more leads. Will it also mean signing up on the Internet on some of the many bridal sites so that you can have more exposure as well as leads coming in? Or will you need to perhaps make appointments with other vendors and actually visit reception sites to make your name further known? How about joining a vendor group and getting leads through them? Each area of the country is different, so it might take some thinking on your part as to what will work the best for you and your business.

The third sample resolution is to improve

on your MC capabilities. First, you could rehearse out loud, record your own voice and see how you could improve. Even better, you could take a class on speaking. (One of the great ones is Mark Ferrell's *MC Workshop*.)

These are just some ideas; you know what areas you need to work on in each category. The trick is to not set the resolutions or goals so high that it is impossible to make them. Don't set yourself up for failure. Start small and work up gradually to greater and greater success. One of the most important things is to always keep the solutions in a positive mode. Instead of saying, "I won't eat junk food," say to yourself, "I love to eat healthy food." Instead of saying, "I won't waste time," say to yourself, "I am using my time wisely and I am more productive!" Instead of saying, "I won't be nervous as I announce tonight" say, "I am confident and have an excellent speaking voice!" These positive mental adjustments will go a long way in improving your attitude and strengthening your resolve. In this way, you have gone way beyond making a resolution. By writing everything down, you have made them real and tangible. They are becoming real goals with specific results in mind.

SUCCESS: OFF THE CHARTS!

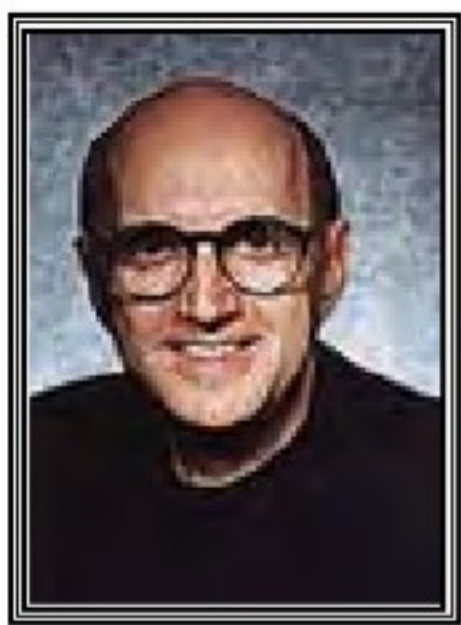
The final step is to fine-tune your goals. Write down a schedule for each of the three categories. Be specific in how you will implement your solu-

tions for each one. An example for your first goal of losing weight may be to get more exercise. But don't just write down "get more exercise!" You must be specific, such as, "On Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:00 AM I will work out to *Sweatin' with the Oldies* (well, maybe something other than that—you get what I mean. It must be specific with days, times, etc. Also, have a chart so that you can keep track of your progress and all of the actions that you have taken to reach whatever goal it is that choose. (If you find this difficult or are unsure of how to chart your progress, feel free to contact me any time at the email listed below. I am always glad to be of assistance to all of my fellow DJs.)

If you choose to make New Year's resolutions, they can actually be very productive if you follow these steps to success. Just make each resolution the first step of a process, find your solutions to each one, don't make them so high that they are impossible to fulfill, and then follow through each day. The success that you will achieve will make it well worth the effort. **MB**

Please send any comments on this article, suggestions for future articles or questions to djcoach@mobilebeat.com.

Paul Kida, The DJ Coach, is a founding member of the Colorado Disc Jockey Association. He owns JAMMCATTS DJ Entertainment (www.jammcattdj.com) and is often a speaker at the Mobile Beat DJ Shows.



Building Your Mobile Entertainment Brand **Part 2**

John's Branding Top Ten:
It might make you laugh
...all the way to the bank

By John Steinberg

Last issue we started to talk about the vital importance of branding and promotion in your business—even if the business is just you! In this article we'll go a little deeper. For your edification and easy recall, I offer below "John's Top Ten Branding Tips" for mobile entertainment professionals.

Before we hit the list, though, let's rewind for a moment. A "brand" is a symbol that causes the audience or your customers to connect with you in a positive way. Your brand brings to mind your unique characteristics, and helps you promote differences rather than present similarities between you and your competitors. Brand messages should be short and easy to remember. Good brands also have a combination of visual elements (logos and recurring graphics) and verbal elements (slogans and catch phrases that are used consistently). Now, let's look at ten ways to build your brand.

JOHN'S TOP TEN BRANDING TIPS

1 **Make your brand message simple and memorable.** It needs to roll off the

tongue, be easy to spell, and easy to remember. "We Party With You" is better than "Upholding Higher Standards of Professional Mobile Entertainment Worldwide." (See #3 below too...)

2 **Make it accessible to your target audience.** Talk in the "voice" of the people that you are addressing. For example, don't say "Best Damn DJ Company On the Planet" if you are targeting church groups or corporate clients.

3 **Make it fit on a business card.** In other words, keep it short. I've seen tri-fold business cards printed on both sides, masquerading as the company promo kit. This gives the impression that this is all you have, and does not instill confidence in buyers. If you get tempted to be verbose, remember that a slogan is different from website copy or a sales brochure.

4 **Deliver the message consistently across all media.** Be sure that your visual and verbal presentations are the same on your print material, on your road cases and trucks, on your website, and in your proposal packages. If you lack consistency, clients will not be sure to whom they are talking, and will go elsewhere.

5 **Make subtle rather than radical adjustments over time.** Yes, things will change, but... Remember the Rolling Stones' "lips and tongue" visual that we mentioned last time? They have been using that logo for about 35 years. It gets updated every few years, but the changes are slight, so that you always know that it's the Stones. Likewise with your verbal message—if you change too much or too frequently, clients will think that the new message is coming from a different company.

6 **It's OK to state the obvious.** When telling your company story, the things that are obvious to you (like your history, credentials, mission, values, equipment list, awards, etc.) are NOT obvious to your prospective clients. I've talked to DJs and sound companies who insist that "Everyone knows who we are, so why should we tell them that we've been doing this since 1988, etc. etc. etc.?" I typically reply, "How do you know that they know all that? Are you confident that the new owner/buyer/client knows your story?" Even if the answer is yes, your growth is going to come from equipping both current and prospective clients with a positive message about you that they can use to sell you others (see #10 below...).

7 **Get feedback from others before you promote your brand.** When you are creating or refining your brand message, test it on your staff, friends, family, and maybe a few loyal clients before printing a lot of expensive materials. You are likely to be pleasantly surprised that

the people close to you: 1) have a slightly different and potentially more accurate view of you and your company, and 2) they probably have some good ideas to share.

8 **Get professional help where necessary,** unless you already are a professional. By professional help, I don't mean psychiatry, but I do mean graphic design and copy writing. Good mobile entertainers are seldom expert graphics people or wordsmiths. The costs involved are minor compared with the upside: a higher quality, longer lasting brand message and image.

9 **Know when to utilize representation.** Representation (for example, by a publicist) has two advantages: better time management and positioning. Eventually, your business will grow to the point that you need to spend all of your time dealing with delivering quality entertainment to your customers. That means you won't have time to deal with building your brand via the press, unless your firm has an in-house marketing and public relations person. In addition, publicity agents have existing relationships with the media and can position you as what you are: an expert in your field who is making news, as opposed to someone groveling for ink.

10 **Build a community.** Your database of business contacts and buyers becomes an extension of you. One of the biggest benefits of building a strong brand is that everyone in your world—from employees and fellow vendors to satisfied clients and other "fans"—becomes part of your business community (read as "salesforce"). The more confidence that they have in your brand, the more business they will refer to you. And with low-cost professional and social networking now available (LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, MySpace, etc.), the tools to build an online community are readily accessible. Everybody wins.

THE GOAL: BALANCED PERFORMANCE

Branding is a lot like providing great entertainment—it's both an art and a science. If you treat it only as an art or something subjective, it's easy to forget the details and get lost in the shuffle. If you treat it only as a science, you risk sending a stilted, boring, or inaccurate brand message. Find a balance. Don't hesitate to get help. Follow the Top Ten Branding Tips above. Remember that our industry is built on brands and yes, you are a brand too. Good luck and keep me posted! **MB**

*John Stiernberg is founder and principal consultant with Stiernberg Consulting, a leading business development firm (www.stiernberg.com). John has over 25 years experience in music/entertainment technology. He currently works with audio and music companies and others on strategic planning and market development. His book *Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters* is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at john@stiernberg.com.*

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QSC: A Chronicle of Quality Part 2

Driving force Pat Quilter and marketing maestro Evan MacKenzie speak about the QSC tradition and new directions in powered loudspeakers.

From one of those mythical-sounding-but-true beginnings in a small Southern California shop, to its current position as one of the leading amplifier manufacturers in the world, QSC has always maintained focus on high quality and truly serving the needs of working entertainers. Here we continue the conversation started in the last issue.

Evan MacKenzie : One of the things, Ryan, that I just want to thank you for is that you've been a huge supporter and user of the HPRs. And I'm not trying to make a shameless plug here, although sometimes I can't help myself because that's my job, but you're a classic example and I think a lot of your readership and listenership is a classic example of real world use of what Pat and his team put together. In other words, like I said at the beginning, responding to a need. And the response back from you folks has been, "Wow, they do everything they say and actually a little bit more." And that's really at the core value of QSC. We know you make a living off our products so we don't want to get in the way of that. We just want to be here to serve your aspirations and your goals with your businesses. Period.

Pat Quilter: And that's a point worth reinforcing. A lot of people who work here have had the experience of performing in public, whether professionally or for benefits or whatever. I mean, I play a little bit myself. And we all know the sinking feeling when something just dies on you and your show is suddenly dead. And we just do everything possible to prevent that from happening.

Ryan Buger: Yeah. I recently got a call from another disc jockey in my market... He had a set of speakers; one side went out at 9:00, the other side went out at 10:30. And he just said, "I'm sorry. I can't do anything about it." He was not using hardware that was made for what he was doing...

PQ: And that is one of the big differences between pro audio and consumer. We're the heavy haulers of the industry. We make products that are designed to carry a load day in and day out and do that for years at a time without wearing out. And once somebody has gone through their first round of equipment choices, they begin to understand that it's worth paying the little extra to get the best quality you can afford, because it will stand by you and you can use it for many years.

EM: Nobody else in the industry, unless it happened in the last week or so, gives you a free six-year warranty on pretty much everything we build. And by "pretty much" I mean anything a DJ -- a Mobile Beat person -- is going to need from us, there's a six-year warranty. And that's not because we're paranoid or worried,

that's because we know they're going to last and we're here to take care of you nonetheless. I mean, there are countless examples of 36 hour turnarounds. Someone loses something on one of our products on a Saturday night and by Monday or Tuesday morning their product is back to them fixed.

PQ: And many of your readers have probably enjoyed reading the "Obsessed" feature on our website, which has hours of real-world war stories. Dunkings seem to be a persistent theme in these pieces, and it is amazing even to me. I mean, I do the very best I can to think about the possibilities and design to survive random accidents and yet I see some of the things our product has gone through and still survived and I just go, "Wow." But that's the result of decades of experience and our attitude of trying to give the customers *something* even if the worst happens; don't leave them completely down.

EM: Yeah. If your readers haven't visited the Obsessed section of our website, it's right there on the home page. There's a banner for it called Obsessed. There was a contest we ran last year where people posted stories and then we chose the most calamitous, outrageous, insane accident that could possibly happen each month and gave them a big gift certificate for our gear. And then there was one grand prize winner that got a huge chunk of money.

There are about 130 stories posted there and you can actually communicate with those people. It's a great way to network and talk to people about not just our gear, a lot of them are stories about gear they've owned before us. Like Pat was just talking about, you go through that first round of equipment purchase. But there are some extremely entertaining stories on this website, including the grand prize winner. Basically his amp sat in two feet of sewage for 36 hours and those amps are still working to this day and he actually never made a visit to our repair shop. He just hosed them out.

PQ: Hosed them down and dried them out thoroughly and, by golly, they came back on. Not that we recommend trying this at home (laughs)

EM: Yeah. (laughing)

RB: Well, I was doing some research over the last couple days, reading through your history. One thing that popped out at me was the catch phrase "imported from Southern California." It kind of hit me: How does QSC compete in a market where so many other companies can, if they want to, call an overseas audio manufacturer and say, "Make me 1500-watt-per-side amplifiers," where you guys are developing, designing and doing so much of the work here in the states, including building a ton of the hardware here. That might be a Pat question or an Evan question. I don't know.



EM: That's a Pat question.

PQ: Although progress marches on and all of the manufacturing areas in the world are wide awake and learning more every day, you really can't just pick up the phone and say, "Design us a 500 watt professional amplifier and send it over," and really expect it to work. There's a lot more to it than that. We have a book-size qualification procedure that requires many months of arduous testing to prove a product is ready to go out, regardless of where it's manufactured. And they've all got to get through this process before we consider them ready for prime time.

And I have to say, we don't believe in slamming our competition; we'd rather focus on just improving our own product. But we've yet to have a competitor product make it all the way through this qualification without giving up at some point. And it's usually not even the deliberate torture tests, but just trying to get it to really go the distance just on audio material.

So it is a very stringent process, one that embodies, again, decades of hard knocks that we've learned by putting stuff out there and seeing what happens to it. QSC has very highly developed quality control processes and many times we sort of curse ourselves because it seems to take us a while to get something done, because there's so many t's to cross, i's to dot. But at the end of the day when you start making thousands of something, it really pays off because they all work. You don't have unpredictable product delays. You know exactly what has to be done at each step.

Some of our high volume products are made by very carefully selected offshore manufacturing partners. But we still do a lot of stuff here in Costa Mesa, as you know, because many of our customers need a wide selection of products from our cinema and commercial catalogs and they'll order two of these and three of those and five of the others and they need them next week. And you can't just buy that stuff offshore and store it waiting for someone to buy it; it's just not realistic.

So we have a very highly developed build-to-order capability here in Costa Mesa that, aside from being able to serve those customers effectively, keeps us very closely in touch with the manufacturing process. So when we design a product, no matter where we intend to build it, it's designed to use good materials,

go together easily, and hold up in the field. And those are core values that we've had all these years and plan to keep firmly in our playbook.

RB: *About a year and a half ago I came out and saw your "build-to-order" factory and how everything comes in, gets tested heavily after it's put together by robots, put together by humans...then at the end, you guys are checking everything again very heavily. It gets boxed and goes out that same day if the orders come in a little bit before lunch, if I remember correctly. I was just really impressed.*

PQ: It is rather breathtaking. When we started the company 40 years ago I had dreams and visions. I said, "Some day we're going to be big. Some day our name will be in lights." But I honestly never imagined anything this slick. I mean, my imagination sort of extended to more benches with more people hunched over soldering irons. And I have to say, our build-to-order factory is a modern miracle. We can go from raw material to a finished amp in about two hours, which means if someone phones in an emergency order they really, really need right now, we can build it and ship it before the day is over. And that really is amazing when you think about it. But that kind of attention to detail and flexibility is part of what lets us do what we do.

RB: *Yeah. I'm looking through your site a little more as we're talking and you've got a lot of videos and different stuff that people can check out. Maybe even having a video of the build-to-order, just so people know what's happening with these amplifiers, might be something that would be interesting to have online some day. People are also very interested in Dr. Q as the "Q" of QSC and knowing who you all are.*

EM: Actually, if you go to our website there is a video to download called "Building Legends." And that takes you through a complete tour of the whole place and you meet Pat and you meet Barry, his founding partner; and you meet John Andrews, Barry's brother who came along about five years later.

PQ: I think you get a walk down the production line in the video.

EM: You do. You get a walk down the whole amp line. And then of course you see the final test that Pat does to every single product. I'm lying (laughs). But you do get to see one of my favorite tests in that "Building Legends" video and it has to do with a roof about three stories above a parking lot. And I'll let your viewers go and discover what that is.

RB: *Is there anything else that you want people to know about QSC?*

PQ: Well, we just want to thank you for letting us talk to our customers. And let everyone know we are enthusiasts. We do the very best job we can so you guys can do your job and put on the best show you can. And we enjoy being in the audio business; I think our passion for it shows and it's just been great being here in California, a world center of show business, knowing that we have some part in this worldwide enterprise of entertaining people and making their leisure hours a little more pleasant.

EM: You know, one of the things in closing -- and then I'm going to throw it back to Pat for the benediction here -- is when it comes to your readership and your listeners and the whole mobile DJ, mobile entertainer market. is we recognize you guys and you girls and we know who you are. We take the time to find out through various online voice-of-the-customer type surveys and listening to you at shows.

And what that goes to is that not only do we recognize you and know who you are, but we appreciate you. And I mean that in the most genuine way possible, which is one of the reasons I'm here and one of the reasons why a lot of audio professionals -- be they on the engineering side, the marketing side or the sales side -- have migrated to QSC in the last decade, is this is a company of recognition and appreciation for its customer base and service. And that's why I'm here. I think that's why a lot of people are here.

And we really just wanted to say thank you to you and to your readership and listener ship. We recognize you, we know who you are, and we really appreciate you.

RB: *Time for the big finale. Pat?*

PQ: Gee, how do you top that?

EM: I'm going to leave the room now.

PQ: I sort of gave you my thoughts a minute ago but I can only repeat. We like the idea of helping people connect to people and as an amateur musician, I love the feeling of joining in the harmony that happens when you're making music. Getting everyone out on the dance floor, rockin' the joint, has got to be the same kind of thrill, and we're just glad to have a part in it. **MB**

Wireless Relief?

FCC adopts rules for unlicensed use of television "white spaces"

Editor's Note: The following is from an FCC press release. To supplement and interpret the government's info for their users, a number of wireless microphone manufacturers have made efforts to explain the changes via info on their websites. For example, a helpful explanation can be found at www.sennheiserusa.com/spectrumreallocation/.

In its continuing efforts to promote efficient use of spectrum and to extend the benefits of such use to the public, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has adopted a Second Report and Order (Second R&O) that establishes rules to allow new, sophisticated wireless devices to operate in broadcast television spectrum on a secondary basis at locations where that spectrum is open. (This unused TV spectrum is now commonly referred to as television "white spaces"). The rules will allow for the use of these new and innovative types of unlicensed devices in the unused spectrum to provide broadband data and other services for consumers and businesses.

The rules represent a careful first step to permit the operation of unlicensed devices in the TV white spaces and include numerous safeguards to protect incumbent services against harmful interference. The rules will allow for both fixed and personal/portable unlicensed devices. Such devices must include a geolocation capability and provisions to access over the Internet a database of the incumbent services, such as full power and low power TV stations and cable system head-ends, in addition to spectrum-sensing technol-



ogy. The database will tell the white space device what spectrum may be used at that location.

Wireless microphones will be protected in a variety of ways. The locations where wireless microphones are used, such as sporting venues and event and production facilities, can be registered in the database and will be protected in the same way as other services. The Commission also has required that devices include the ability to listen to the airwaves to sense wireless microphones as an additional measure of protection for these devices.

All white space devices are subject to equipment certification by the FCC Laboratory. The Laboratory will request samples of the devices for testing to ensure that they meet all the pertinent requirements.

The Commission also will permit certification of devices that do not include the geolocation and database access capabilities, and instead rely solely on spectrum sensing to avoid causing harmful interference, subject to a much more rigorous approval process.

In a process that will be open to the public, applications will be released for public comment prior to agency action. Such devices will be tested by our Laboratory to a "Proof of Performance" standard both in the lab and in a variety of real-world environments to ensure they do not cause interference to licensed services when in use. The staff report and recommendation will also be released for public comment. For now, certification of any such device will require approval by the full Commission.

Manufacturers may continue to provide additional information to the Commission to support the use of higher power devices in adjacent channels. In addition, the Commission will explore in a separate Notice of Inquiry whether higher-powered unlicensed operations might be permitted in TV white spaces in rural areas.

The Commission will closely oversee and monitor the introduction of TV white space devices. The Commission will act promptly to remove from the market any equipment found to be

causing harmful interference and will require the responsible parties to take appropriate actions to remedy any interference that may occur. (Action by the Commission November 4, 2008, by Second Report and Order - FCC 08-260.) **MB**

FCC Wireless Info

News and other information about the FCC is available at www.fcc.gov.

A detailed report, "Unlicensed Operation in the TV Broadcast Bands; Additional Spectrum for Unlicensed Devices..." can be found at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-08-260A1.doc

Alternative Channels

Audio-Technica has introduced an interesting way to deal with the impending wireless changes. The SpectraPulse® Ultra Wideband (UWB) Wireless Microphone System represents a completely new application of A-T's award-winning, patented Ultra Wideband (UWB) technology. This system bypasses the increasingly congested RF bottleneck to deliver clear, intelligible audio without the performance and set-up issues associated with conventional wireless systems.

Designed for conferences, courtrooms, corporate events and more, according to the manufacturer, "SpectraPulse offers 14 simultaneous channels that operate flawlessly without RF turf wars, frequency hunting/coordination, 'white space' issues, or interference." Although it has yet to be announced, we hope Audio-Technica makes this technology available in more mobile-oriented configurations sometime soon.

Prodigy Tightens Focus

B-52 again unites mixer and player in a strong all-in-one workhorse: The Prodigy Dual CD/MP3 DJ Workstation

By Marti DeBergi

Sensing a need for expansion in their player/mixer brand, B-52 developed a baby brother piece that from the outset might look identical to its older sibling. The Prodigy name is still conspicuous, but in light of the new sibling's versatile-yet-basic feel, the letters "FX" have been removed to reflect the piece's back-to-basics approach.

FROM BLUE TO GREEN

The first thing one who is familiar with the FX version of the Prodigy will notice is that the two units are very similar both in size and physical layout. The most discernable difference is the green display and accents instead of the previous blue.

Also similar to the FX are the dual scratch/jog wheels and the attached mixer, which makes this system an easy rollout. With the capability for an additional six inputs and three microphones, the Prodigy is not only easy, but versatile. B-52 even went as far as to make the mixer effects compatible with an effects loop control and input. Thankfully, on the new unit, there is still a clear and helpful display for artist, title, BPM, and pitch information.

LISTEN TO THAT PRODIGY PLAY

Perhaps my favorite thing overall with this piece is the sync-ability with the crossfader and jog wheels that can only happen because they are in the same unit. It feels to that there is a correct tightness in the fader starts that some other highly-touted systems don't have. It is also reassuring to see that the players have an IPR, or Independent Player Reset, so that rebooting the entire unit in the case of a malfunctioning disc is not mandatory.



As I mentioned, the Prodigy plays MP3s. Some discs could have a couple hundred songs on them, which might make finding the song you need difficult. Not so here. On this unit, scrolling through files on an MP3 disc was easy thanks to a keypad just below the display screen on both players. To go with this, search knobs (instead of a dreaded "next" button) made DJing with the Prodigy easier than other MP3 disc units I've tried.

PUTTING THE PRODIGY TO WORK

I can see this unit being used both as a primary rig and a complete backup solution. For multi-ops, this rig is very appealing because of its versatility and because of its price. (I've seen it advertised as low as \$700. Remember, that's for dual players AND a beefy mixer.) It also has the reliability of being an all-in-one unit, so employees simply cannot forget cables to go from the mixer to the players.

For solo mobiles or those who really prefer rack-mounted rigs, the Prodigy can serve you very well as a dependable backup, again, with minimum set-up time needed, or as a primary player at a secondary location for occasions such as when cocktail music is in one room and dancing is in another.

As for transportability, the Prodigy's status as an all-in-one unit plays very well into its ability to be cased and moved efficiently. Differing from the FX, this version of the prodigy does not come with its own ATA flight case, which is something that the consumer sees in the purchase price. However, a case for the unit can be purchased quite easily.

DISTINCT SIBLINGS

Comparing Prodigy it to its elder brother ProdigyFX, it is easy to see that the FX has more toys and a few more buttons—more gravy than its straight-up meat-and-potatoes counterpart. I know people who tinker a lot and like to use a lot effects and tricks. For them, the FX is the recommended choice. For anyone else who takes a more basic, straightforward approach to mixing, the Prodigy is your unit.

With solid construction, a practical layout and plenty of flexibility in output/input, the Prodigy is likely to soon find itself at work in many mobile setups as a trusted, no-nonsense performance partner. **MB**

www.b52pro.com

Sizing Up the Prodigy

CD / MP3 PLAYER

- ◆ Plays all formats of CD, CDRW and MP3 files with full functionality
- ◆ Dual-mode touch sensitive jog wheel
- ◆ Seamless loop with on-the-fly access to loop editing
- ◆ Independent buffer memory anti-shock for each player
- ◆ Pitch control and master tempo with up to $\pm 100\%$ shift range
- ◆ Oversized LCD display with wide viewing angle and brightness control
- ◆ True instant start for both CD and MP3 operations
- ◆ Easy MP3 file search by folder, file name, title or artist
- ◆ Direct keypad access to tracks on each CD player
- ◆ Auto BPM or manual TAP tempo
- ◆ Three hot cue points
- ◆ Three independent memory banks can remember up to 1500 cue points
- ◆ Integrated fader start
- ◆ Slot loading transports with green LED illuminator
- ◆ IPR - Independent Player Reset for each CD/MP3 player provides fail-safe disk jamming protection
- ◆ Built-in memory to save settings (memory is upgradeable)

VCA MIXER

- ◆ 4-channel VCA mixer with flexible input configurations
- ◆ Premium quality crossfader
- ◆ Effects loop with assign button on each channel
- ◆ Hamster switch
- ◆ Rotary crossfader curve control
- ◆ 10-segment tri-color LED metering on master section
- ◆ 3-band EQ on each channel
- ◆ Dual mode Split/Blend headphone monitoring
- ◆ Mono switch on master out

INPUTS / OUTPUTS

- ◆ 4 line, 2 phono, 1 MP3 and 2 XLR mic inputs
- ◆ Balanced master XLR outputs, plus booth, master, record RCA outputs
- ◆ CD direct outputs for use with time-coded software control systems

I Like to Move It, Move It

American DJ pushes LED forward with the X-Move LED Moving Head.

By J. Richard Roberts

If the trend in lighting over the past decade has been to develop lighter, smaller gear with professional output and sturdy engineering, then American DJ has produced a lighting fixture that is sure to meet and maybe exceed expectations. The new X-Move LED is based on a combination of two other popular ADJ technologies. The X-Move draws its purpose and direction from the Accu series of yoke heads. To this, they added LED technology, which enabled the X-Move to combine high output with light weight, low power consumption and small stature.

THROUGH THE GIG-RINGER

Until now, most LED fixtures have been either too basic or too dim for my tastes. While they do offer benefits such as long life and no duty cycle, I have still preferred the effects of conventional fixtures. For me, the best fixtures can be used in any situation, with or without fog, and in any level of brightness (save for mercury vapor lights). It is with that firm stance on the art of production lighting that I took the X-Move LED out on the road.

After a few days of bench testing to see where the X-Move would fit into my light show, I chose to "fly" the unit directly above my head on my 1" square truss system, which is standard for my high school shows. In this configuration, the X-Move acted as a centerpiece yoke head. I appreciated how the low power draw (0.4A), allowed me to use the headroom on one of my



lighting circuits quite efficiently without having to scope out more power.

Because of my aforementioned affliction for conventional lighting, I expected my light show to dominate the X-Move in terms of output and even aesthetics. No sooner had I adequately hazed the room and dropped the house lights in preparation for my lighting test, then I discovered that the hype was correct. The output on the X-Move is visually equivalent to a 250W halogen lamp, which is what my scanners (I use four with this particular show) run. Acting as a complement to my scanners that night, I even noticed something else: The X-Move's color mix is more fluid and vivid than that of my conventional fixtures. This is apparently because there is no color wheel inside the unit that would create that "roll" when changing colors. Also, I really liked the idea of manual focus because we play diverse venues with different ceiling heights and distances to the dance floor.

COLOR ME MOVED

The X-Move LED impresses with its 8 color/8 gobo function. As I mentioned, I was blown away by the vividness of each of those colors. Often with LED the color matrix is not very precise, but with the X-Move the colors were what you wanted when you wanted and didn't have any sort of bleed over. Additionally, the gobos presented here are actually very modern and not all

the "same old shapes" that are *always* there. With the growing trend in up-selling ambient lighting for event, the X-Move could also be used as a lightweight, relatively inexpensive option for throwing static or slow-moving gobos on walls or structures.

Weighing in at a grand total of 10 pounds, the X-Move LED can be mounted almost anywhere, from your truss to your speaker stands. Be careful of the mounting bracket though, as it and the screws involved are small pieces and can get lost easily. Of course, DMX programming and control is not always needed, but is recommended for maximum effect. But for quick startup, the unit also has stand-alone sound-active mode and master-slave operation.

I really dig yoke head type fixtures, but since power is sometimes limited at the venues that I frequent, I don't always get to use them. This fixture seems like a good solution to this problem, providing professional results with minimal power consumption, a small footprint and an amazing output. When comparing this light with conventional halogen fixtures, this light wins in functionality and durability. Combining this with its low weight and great road test, I have to say the X-Move LED is one of the best mobile DJ lighting fixtures to come out in the past few years. **MB**

www.americandj.com



CHAUVET PAINTS ART FAIR GREEN

An eco-friendly art fair with "green" artists, curators, designers and lighting was featured in Miami's premier art show, Art Basel. The "green art fair MIAMI 2008," held the first week in December, drew 15,000 art patrons into its venue—three 5,000 square-foot adjoining tents made of recycled fabric and aluminum. Inside, visitors viewed a fashion show and browsed art made of recycled materials. Their purchases were also packed in reusable shopping bags.

Chauvet LED lighting fixtures were used to highlight the eco-friendly products. Nick Assunto, CEO of Visual Formula, located in Miami's design district, volunteered to light the fair using 82 Chauvet LED wash fixtures, powered by solar panels and a biodiesel generator, further lessening the eco-friendly lights' carbon footprint. The LED luminaires included COLORado 1s, COLORado 3s, LEDsplash-2 and Q-Wash LED fixtures.

Even Assunto's lighting was catalogued as an art project entitled "100 percent LED."

"The whole idea came up because of energy conservation and LED fixtures do just that," Assunto said. The green fair is in its second year, but it's the first year that Visual Formula, a lighting installer for clubs and high-end residences, has participated.

"We're crazy about LED technology," said Assunto. "We're lighting up the whole canvas with changing color. And we're lighting every single exhibit with LED as well," he added. Because LEDs consume less power, they simplify the power run and there is no heat generation out of the lighting fixtures."

The green art fair MIAMI'08 also included an organic restaurant committed to creating and preparing gourmet foods that were organically grown and naturally produced, a green learning center and "eco-mentaries," short films from around the world that highlighted green living. For more on Chauvet products, go to www.chauvetlighting.com



DMX SOFTWARE...FOR YOUR IPHONE!

Got an iPhone and love lighting? Then you are going to love this...Luminair is a new application from DMXSoft that allows you to control DMX lighting directly from your iPhone. While very basic compared to many full-featured products on the market, it still offers some great tools, especially for the ubiquitous LED lighting that's been taking over the entertainment world. To use this product you'll simply need a wi-fi router, an Art-Net DMX interface, such as the SLESA-IP, the Luminair software, and an iPhone or iPod Touch.

Using Artistic License's Art-Net protocol over your device's built-in wi-fi connection, Luminair communicates with other compatible hardware and software on your network. A user-friendly interface lets you utilize this compact tool as a remote focus tool, for advanced architectural lighting, or simply as the centerpiece of your intelligent lighting rig. The touch-board channel layout view provides quick channel setup for all

of your DMX fixture profiles. A multi-track, touch-enabled mixer, controls with accurate precision, whether you have one fixture, or one-hundred. X/Y grid controls allow you to pan and tilt moving heads. As a DMX data analyzer, data is displayed in realtime as a touch-scrollable overview of all channels in the input universe. Selecting a specific channel shows the current value, as well as the past 24 seconds of data in graph form.

Wireless connectivity allows you to be unchained from the mixer desk or patch bay. Simply connect a hardware Art-Net to DMX converter to your wi-fi router and lighting equipment. Luminair is compatible with any standard Wi-Fi router, and supports all existing security settings such as WPA, and WEP. Efficient use of your device's processor, memory and network communications, help conserve battery power for long use. For more on Luminair, head over to <http://synthe-fx.com/products/luminair>.

NEW AXIS OF LASER POWER

From the innovative minds at X-Laser comes the awesome new AXIS. This patent pending laser light re-imagines what is possible from a Class IIIA/R (no variance required) laser. Offsetting the laser diodes a few inches allowed X-Laser to build the AXIS with the most powerful laser diodes possible within Class IIIA limits and the new sixteen mirror prismatic optical train sends that power streaking out over a 90 degree projection angle. The Axis is FDA certified as Class IIIA.

The AXIS comes with many new-to-the-industry features such as an optical train that incorporates eight static and eight rotating, indexing prismatic mirrors that create unique laser patterns including a stunning off-axis rotation in both directions. In addition, the AXIS provides continuous and variable wheel rotation pattern speed effects plus Stop to display your favorite effect. Standard features of all X-Laser entertainment products include onboard DMX Mode, Auto Mode, a dramatic "on beat" sound active mode, and adjustable sound sensitivity. Six DMX chan-



nels control every aspect of the AXIS including pattern, rotation, speed, variable strobing, and color selection.

Light generation comes from an extremely bright 85mW native generated 532nm green DPSS diode and a 125mW native generated red 650nm DPSS diode. Each is offset along the optical train to create ninety degrees of room coverage. Total power draw is 30 watts and comes maintenance free in a rugged all metal housing. www.x-laser.com



RADIUS REACHES OUT IN MULTIPLE DIRECTIONS

Now mobile entertainers can have one convenient deck that functions as a CD/MP3 player and also controls their MIDI software. American Audio has introduced the Radius 1000, an exciting new CD/MP3 player with MIDI capabilities for controlling professional music playback software. In addition to functioning as an 8-channel MIDI controller for music playback software, the Radius 1000 also plays CD, CD-R and MP3 discs, giving users the flexibility of DJ-ing with discs or a computer. In fact, there's even a Dual Mode that allows you to play a CD or MP3 disc and control your computer software at the same time.

With its dual functionality, the unit provides its own backup system: In the event of a computer crash during a gig, DJs can simply switch over to playing discs on the Radius 1000, just like a regular CD/MP3 player. The unit is compatible with popular DJ software programs, including Traktor and Serato (software not included with unit). When in the MIDI mode an external sound-card is required (not included).

The deck comes with 9 onboard digital effects: Scratch (Digital Scratch and Beat Juggle modes), Filter, Echo, Trans, Skid, Phase, Flanger, Pan and Bop. Time and Ratio Adjustment is available for all effects, and a Digital BPM Counter keeps them locked in sync with the beat of the music. The Radius 1000's big 6-inch jog wheel operates in 3 modes Normal, Scratch and Auto Cue Scratch,

A bright display shows track and artist ID tags for quick reference, and a red LED visual marker rotates around the jog wheel to show you what point within the track the CD or MP3 is currently playing. The Radius 1000 offers premium features found only on the highest quality CD players, including Seamless Loop, Advanced Track Search, 10-Second Anti-Shock Memory, Fader Q Start, 3 Flash Start Buttons, Digital Output (S/PDIF), Tempo Lock and Instant Start. For DJs who employ larger, more sophisticated audio setups, a Flip Flop function lets you relay playback between two Radius 1000 CD/MP3 players.

Compact and lightweight for easy mobility, the Radius 1000 measures 10.5" x 14" x 4.25" and weighs 8 lbs. www.americanaudio.us

NEW FOLDED HORN ROCKS DOWN LOW

Cerwin-Vega!, a leading manufacturer of loudspeakers and audio products, has introduced the C-Series of passive folded horn subwoofers, providing performance improvements over previous folded horns and incorporating a striking new design. The new bass boxes are aimed at mobile DJs, gigging musicians, nightclubs, live performance venues and sound companies that demand the ultimate in accurate and loud bass reinforcement.

Cerwin-Vega speakers are renowned for their earth-rumbling bass characteristics and the



C-series folded horn subwoofers continue this legacy. Folded horns differ from traditional subwoofers in that they use a complex path within the speaker enclosure to create a horn that reinforces bass frequencies. This results in a speaker that plays larger and louder than the speaker's driver.

The C-series features three new models: the AB-36C, EL-36C and the JE-36C, each featuring a rugged, custom-designed Cerwin-Vega 18" cast-frame speaker. With six-and-a-half feet of folded horn chamber length in the AB-36C and the EL-36C, and five feet of folded horn chamber length in the JE-36C, the C-Series delivers more bass per square inch than other subwoofers. All of the C-series folded horns provide enhanced SPL performance, beefy and rugged die cast aluminum doors that improves heat dissipation, an attractive curved horn mouth bracing for smoother frequency response, and reinforced pole cups and handles for easier setup and transport.

Performance enhancements for the AB-36C include Stroker technology from the legendary Cerwin-Vega mobile audio division, which translates into increased output and reduced distortion. Low frequency performance has been increased in the JE-36C due to a new cabinet design.

"We are extremely proud to announce that we have made the industry's best folded horns even better," states Michael Newman, Brand

Manager for Cerwin-Vega. "True to Cerwin-Vega's legacy, the entire C-Series line delivers extreme sound levels and thundering bass in a roadworthy package." www.cerwin-vega.com



The Pioneer Perspective

Part 2

Discussing the development of a DJ gear leader with Karl Detken and Davey Dave

If you are a regular attendee at the Mobile Beat conferences, you no doubt have seen or even met Karl Detken and Davey Dave, the faces of Pioneer Pro DJ on the tradeshow floor. Karl, who has been with the company for 16 years, is Director of Product Planning and Artist Relations for Pioneer Pro DJ, while Dave came to Pioneer three years ago, after stints with a number of other DJ gear manufacturers, to fill the position of Senior Manager for Marketing. We started listening to their discussion of Pioneer and the DJ industry in our last issue. Here we rejoin them...

Ryan Burger: Okay. Well, Pioneer's known for being patient; thoroughly engineering the product. You may not be the first on the market to have something, but what you do release is the best in quality. It seems pretty clear that the R&D process is key to bringing your great gear to market.

Karl Detken: Yeah. One of Pioneer's values is always to have quality product, and that's come down from our car electronics, home electronics, our plasma electronics things—everything we do goes into much R&D. Usually for DJ products it's two to three years of development from the time of idea and inception to the time it actually hits the market. Included in that is a period of intense testing—they have some incredible testing rooms where they put them through 150-degree heat, below freezing, dust testing rooms—and all of that goes through months and months, often six months of some really heavy testing before it

goes out to market.

And one of the reasons is not just because of the philosophy of having quality product that is going to withstand everything out there, but also because from a DJ standpoint—Ryan, as a DJ, you know as well—there is no chance of turning back the hands of time to redo that first dance of the bride and groom if your CD starts skipping. And I've seen over the last 10 to 15 years the demise of many, many units because they come to market too

quickly and they haven't tested long enough. So what happens is it gets out there, it fails, and it fails at the most inopportune time. And it's embarrassing to the DJ. You lose their loyalty.

So it's kind of the reason that we are always a little bit behind the curve of technology. Some people always wonder why are you taking a year longer than everybody else to release whatever video or MP3 gear or whatever. It's because we want the product to work



flawlessly as much as it can.

Davey Dave: Yeah. It's very interesting that not only in our market but other markets as well, other industries, that everybody's trying to be first to market with new technologies and things. Pioneer's not the first, but they do have the best, and that's something I'm very proud of as well, to represent that philosophy.

KD: Now, mostly all of our products have been successful, with the exception of—and even these products—the VJM-700 and the DMP, first MP3 player to hit the market—those were the only things that were discontinued very quickly.

DD: Oddly enough, the DMP was the first to have that technology, so they should have waited.

KD: Yeah. It was a little bit ahead of its time, but I think that part of the reason of our success on any product is the fact that when people buy it, they know they're buying quality product that they can rely on.

RB: *Gotcha. Where do you see things going in the next couple years? Is the average mobile disc jockey going to be going into video content? Are they going—where is it going?*

KD: Well, for us there's really kind of three markets that we're always looking at. There's the club market, which Pioneer dominates with probably 90 percent of market share. There's the mobile DJ market. And then there's the hip-hop market. And I think for us our philosophy and our goals still remain the same, which is that we are still pursuing video. We think video's the future. How it plays out into the mobile DJ industry, we are continuing to look at that. The club industry is a little bit easier to kind of visualize and see how that does work for that.

So we're looking at things like controllers, or products that control software, and not just our software that's out there, but a universal controller for all softwares. So we're developing products like that and also still pursuing the video market.

RB: *Gotcha. Well, where are things going in the next couple months? What are we all going to be salivating over soon with the Pioneer nameplate on it? Have you got something in the pipeline you can tease us with a little bit?*

KD: We can't share anything that's too far down the road by 2009, but there are some really, really cool things coming out in 2009 that the market has been asking for and wanting that will again set Pioneer as the pioneer in the industry. But probably close to the time that this podcast airs, we will have released our new headphones, the HDJ-2000. They will be our highest-end headphones that come to market, with better fidelity, better audio quality; new

materials that are being used, alloy metals that are just virtually indestructible; new foam padding similar to the memory foam that's used on mattresses that you spend \$3,000 for. We're developing products with that. It's a better sounding, more comfortable, lighter type of headphones that we're hoping is going to be something that the market wants.

DD: And Ryan, you were talking about the different markets that we target. This is actually a product that's going to expand our market share because it's not only going to be perfect for the professional DJ but also for studio use as well, for like monitoring your mixes in the studio via headphones. So it's the perfect headphones—high-end headphones for studio use and professional DJ use as well.

RB: *Okay. Last thing I really have for you guys is where do you want Pioneer to be known? I guess Dave, it's more in your area because you're the man that gets the word out about the great things that are developed. How do you want Pioneer known in the DJ marketplace?*

DD: I want to maintain—well, Pioneer wants to maintain its high-end brand image. We're viewed as the Lexus, the Mercedes of the DJ world, and we want to maintain that image and show that we justify our price range with quality and reliability and durability and unique feature set. We just want to maintain that high brand image in all product categories

KD: Yeah. I think we've already kind of made our mark in the DJ history, the DJ world, by introducing the CDJ-1000 in 2000—a million CD players is quite a lot. I don't think any manufacturer can even come close to that, and that says a lot. I think Pioneer is what you would call, back in the '80s and '90s, the Technics 1200 and even now the Technics 1200 is the standard turntable for a nightclub DJ, and that I think is where we'll be in the annals of history for DJ products. The CDJ-1000 will be what revolutionized DJs to go from hardcore vinyl to that medium, and it's still being used and probably will be used for several years to come.

RB: *Absolutely fantastic. And by the way, if anybody that's listening to/reading this wants to catch and meet Karl or Davey, the best place to see them will be the upcoming Mobile Beat Las Vegas show. Check out MobileBeat.com for more information on that. Thanks, guys.*

KD: Thank you.

DD: Thanks. I've got to go back to my scuba lessons now. **MB**



Karl Detken



Davey Dave

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And the Nominees Are...

20-SONG COLLECTION SPOTLIGHTS 51ST ANNUAL GRAMMY AWARDS NOMINEES

The Recording Academy's GRAMMY® Recordings has partnered with Rhino Entertainment for the 2009 GRAMMY® Nominees CD, the 15th edition of the best-selling series highlighting artists and songs nominated for the 51st Annual GRAMMY Awards. The 20-song collection will be available January

27 and a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the CD will benefit the MusiCares® Foundation and the GRAMMY Foundation®, two charitable organizations established by The Recording Academy. For more information about the Foundations, please visit www.grammy.com.

"This GRAMMY Nominees CD compilation represents some of the great songs and artists that make up this year's remarkable crop of nominees," said Neil Portnow, President/CEO of The Recording Academy. "We thank Rhino Entertainment for its collaboration on this project, which will once again help fund the vital work of MusiCares and the GRAMMY Foundation, and we look forward to another successful, chart-topping year."

The disc contains many of the most widely recognized GRAMMY categories. The 20 tracks from the 2009 GRAMMY Nominees CD represent nominees from the Record of the Year, Album of the Year, Best New Artist, Song of the Year, Best Female Pop Vocal Performance, and Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals categories. The nominees CD is made possible by a

special arrangement with all of the major music distribution companies and rotates labels from year to year.

"We are thrilled to be working with The Recording Academy to present the best music from this past year," said Rhino Entertainment President Scott Pascucci. "The collection's dynamic range represents a great value for music fans. We are so proud to support the efforts of MusiCares and the GRAMMY Foundation."

The 51st Annual GRAMMY Awards will be held Feb. 8, 2009, at STAPLES Center in Los Angeles, and will be broadcast live in high-definition TV and 5.1 Surround Sound on the CBS Television Network at 8 p.m. (ET/PT). The show also will be supported on radio via Westwood One worldwide.



2009 GRAMMY NOMINEES CD TRACKLIST:

1. Coldplay

"Viva La Vida"

Record of the Year

Album of the Year

Song of the Year

Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals

2. Estelle featuring Kanye West

"American Boy"

Song of the Year

3. Sara Bareilles

"Love Song"

Song of the Year

Best Female Pop Vocal Performance

4. Ne-Yo

"Closer"

Album of the Year

5. Lil Wayne featuring T-Pain

"Got Money"

Album of the Year

6. Robert Plant & Alison Krauss

"Please Read the Letter"

Album of the Year

Record of the Year

7. Radiohead

"House of Cards"

Album of the Year

8. Lady Antebellum

"Love Don't Live Here"

Best New Artist

9. The Jonas Brothers

"Burnin' Up"

Best New Artist

10. Jazmine Sullivan

"Need U Bad"

Best New Artist

11. Duffy

"Mercy"

Best New Artist

Best Female Pop Vocal Performance

12. M.I.A.

"Paper Planes"

Record of the Year

13. Adele

"Chasing Pavements"

Song of the Year

Best New Artist

Record of the Year

Best Female Pop Vocal Performance

14. Katy Perry

"I Kissed A Girl"

Best Female Pop Vocal Performance

15. Leona Lewis

"Bleeding Love"

Record of the Year

Best Female Pop Vocal Performance

16. Pink

"So What"

Best Female Pop Vocal Performance

17. Gnarls Barkley

"Going On"

Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals

18. OneRepublic

"Apologize"

Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals

19. Maroon 5

"Won't Go Home Without You"

Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals

20. The Eagles

"Waiting in the Weeds"

Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals

Fab Four's 1st

THE BEATLES FIRST CONTRACT FETCHES \$211,597 AT LIVEAUCTIONEERS.COM

LiveAuctioneers.com, the leading online resource for high end art, antiques and collectibles, announced today the online sale of the Beatles' first contract for \$211,597, the highest amount ever achieved through LiveAuctioneers by a non-US based auction house.

The historic document which cemented the Fab Four's partnership with manager Brian Epstein in 1962 was featured as part of a live and online auction conducted on November 27 by the Fame Bureau in London.

LiveAuctioneers' CEO, Julian R. Ellison, said he was "ecstatic to see that people have the confidence to purchase items online at this price level. Because this was the very first contract signed by the Beatles and Brian Epstein, it is especially significant to the history of pop music. There's no overestimating its importance."

The Fame Bureau described the contract as an important document in both music and British history.

All four members of the Beatles signed the initial contract on Jan. 24, 1962. The Fame Bureau's auction catalog noted that, according to Epstein's memoirs, the Beatles' first manager refrained from signing the management contract to give the lads the ability to walk away from the agreement if he did not fulfill his promise of landing them major recording contract. By Oct. 1 that year, Epstein, believing he had thus far fulfilled his role as manager, had added his name to the contract. He had signed the Beatles to a recording contract with EMI, and their first single, Love Me Do, was about to be released.

The five-year

contract called for Epstein to receive 25 percent of the gross earnings of the band. The document detailed Epstein's obligations, including undertaking all advertising and publicity for the musicians and advising them on matters concerning clothes, makeup and presentation and construction of their acts.

Included on the document are the signatures of George Harrison's and Paul McCartney's fathers, as those younger Beatles were under the age of 21. The contract contains two signatures by John Lennon, who, inadvertently signed in the wrong place. Realizing his mistake, he struck through the first signature and signed again in the

correct position.

This contract was later updated by a supplementary agreement, also signed by all parties on Jan. 22, 1963, which was included with the lot. All signatures on both the management contract and the supplementary agreement were accompanied by a red wax seal and the signatures of attending witnesses.

Ellison remarked that there has been no downturn in the bidding volume through LiveAuctioneers since the recent woes in world financial markets. "It has held very strong," he said. "As a general trend, people are turning more and more to the Internet for all types of buying. We've noticed a marked bidding increases in sales conducted by auction houses internationally, as well."

About LiveAuctioneers.com: Founded in November 2002 and recently named to Inc. Magazine's 2008 list of the 5000 fastest-growing privately held companies, Manhattan-based LiveAuctioneers.com provides real-time Internet bidding capability to more than 730 auction houses in a dozen countries. LiveAuctioneers.com has opened up once-exclusive sales to the cyber community worldwide through online publication of auction catalogs, and Internet bidding. Similar to telephone bidding, buyers at remote locations can conveniently participate in auctions in real time from their computers as the auction is being conducted. There is no cost to register and no obligation to bid; anyone can watch the action online, in real time. For further information, log on to www.liveauctioneers.com. **MB**

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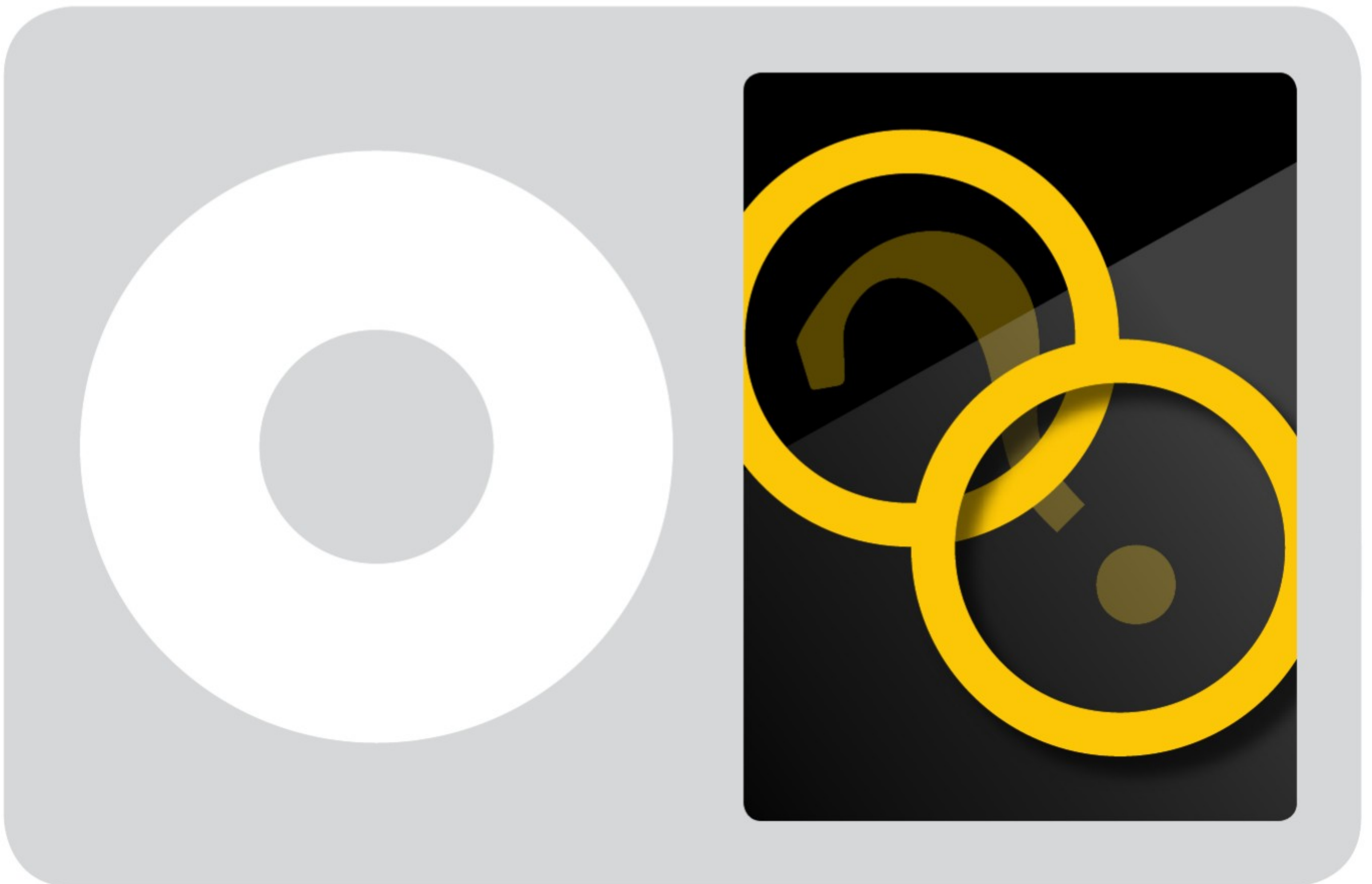


An iPod Wedding? Are You Kidding?

Yet another article about the scourge of the iPod? Well, yes, but this is one to share with grooms who are being tempted by DIY...

By Ed Mullen

Getting married, mister? Congratulations. Are you handling the details with your fiancée? Great. Your job is to arrange the music? Brilliant. You are doing it yourself? How so? Your iPod! You're kidding, right? How much are you spending on your wedding? Oh, it's a control issue? You want your favorites played? Have you really thought this through? Didn't think so.



Although an iPod is a very efficient personal music system, there are several problems that arise when depending on your iPod to handle your wedding reception. Your risk vs. reward is not as clear cut as you might think. So, here comes the "tough love." I've been a mobile disc jockey since 1979. I have some frank advice for you, since you get only one chance to handle this wedding music issue...

To put it as simply as possible: Get a pro. A experienced professional disc jockey solves many reception issues in the planning. Your preferences and song list should be completely explored months before the ceremony and delivered by someone who has been there before. The well-prepared DJ also has professional grade sound equipment and back-up gear that is dependable.

TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

Got some home speakers? What are you using for your amplifier? Briefly, my professional DJ speakers are better than your home speakers. I use powered JBL EON-15 G2 speakers, some of the best portable speakers available. A mobile disc jockey depends on durable, high-performance equipment gig after gig after gig.

Thinking of renting PA gear? Rental equipment costs money. Rental equipment also costs time. Pick-up and drop-off does not include your shopping time spent finding the right sound rental company. Got time? In the week prior to your wedding, time is your most precious commodity. Does the money-back guarantee give you any comfort if it fails at your wedding reception?

Risky business. You will not get a chance to test rental equipment. You can't even do a venue sound check. Are all the connecting wires included? Are your XLR cables matched with 1/4" speaker inputs? Too technical? This is just chapter one. Do you plan on any toasts or blessings to be delivered? Did you forget about the microphone? Would you say that all microphones the same?

When you are listening to your iPod, you involuntarily adjust the volume to your comfort. You'll soon find out that all songs are not recorded at the same volume. Since you are pumping raw iPod sound, you have no volume control or equalizer (bass vs. treble) control. Your iPod is smaller than your keys. Have you ever misplaced your keys? Doesn't it turn your stomach if your drop your digital camera on the floor or your cell phone on the parking lot? How durable is your iPod? Any back-up plan? What could possibly go wrong?

MUSICAL MAGIC—OR MAYHEM?

What about your song selections? With an iPod wedding, you'll get your songs and your random mix, but, you won't get pacing, such as breaking up a lengthy, fast-paced set with one or two ballads. This is especially vital for a reception including a variety of ages. Are guests of all age groups attending?

"Got my favorite song?" Who will be asked this question? You will. It seems you forgot about audience requests or what tendencies are occurring on the dance floor. Observation is one of the most important skills of disc jockeying.

A pro disc jockey takes the bride's and groom's song preferences and presents them

in such a way as to provide the guests with the couple's very own musical signature. "Reading the crowd" is the disc jockey's primary skill. Do you really think that "the crowd will dance to anything" anyway? Are you willing to bet your special day on that idea?

TIME KEEPS ON SLIPPIN'...

Should your wedding day responsibilities include troubleshooting power needs like batteries or chargers? Your attention will be directed to many different people during the ceremony and reception. Every person in attendance would like some of your time. Not to mention, your new partner. Your priorities need to be re-examined if your iPod gets as much attention as your new wedding ring. This statement will also be posed to you, by your new spouse. Guaranteed. Remember the difficulty that you two had selecting the names on your guest list? Your time spent with selected family and selected friends is such a memorable part of the wedding reception, so

Sure, hiring a professional costs more than a do-it-yourself project. But, is your wedding really a do-it-yourself project?

hold it as a gift with great value. Is your attention going to be diverted by sound equipment during the most important day of your life?

Maybe you had the breakthrough idea to ask a wedding party attendant to watch your iPod. So it seems that this friend is no longer a guest, but is now working for you. Maybe you'll trust a non-guest who will baby sit the iPod. And maybe you'll want a first-time chef baking your wedding cake too. Speaking of other vendors, are you aware that experienced vendors like the disc jockey, caterer, photographer, venue manager, video-grapher and wedding coordinator together work out the final details and fine-tune the timing...during the event!

MONEY WELL SPENT

Is it cheaper? Sure, hiring a professional costs more than a do-it-yourself project. But, is your wedding really a do-it-yourself project? This may not be the best time to show how frugal you are.



You are planning the biggest party in your life and you have the opportunity to select experienced, professional vendors—so do the right thing. Although your input and your needs are essential in the planning stage, you must transition to the "guest of honor" stage to fully enjoy your wedding day. Don't you want to experience it together with your new bride as the happy couple?

You will get a fair representation of what the modern disc jockey does during your personal meeting, months before your event. That's why I like meeting the wedding couple to get both bride and groom perspectives on what to do and what not to do. The clients supply me with a song list and wedding preference timeline, just like they will tell their needs to the caterer, florist and so on. Your mix of traditional and modern choices makes your wedding unique. The DJ is the one who will weave your choices into a musical tapestry worthy of your most special occasion.

GET REAL

You should know, by now, that the modern disc jockey is not so anxious to play line dances. This optional choice is covered in part of the couple's song-list and is called the "do not play list". We understand and appreciate that kind of instruction. You should know that the modern disc jockey uses judgment concerning objectionable lyrics. Your iPod does not have that kind of filter. The glut of sunny wedding music advice on the web does not give you the real life pros and cons about the modern disc jockey. There are some major practical limitations when you pre-program the music event, days before your guests see you walk down the aisle.

Every vendor wants a well-planned wedding, just like every client. So, let the chefs cook. Let the florist bring the flowers. Let the photographers shoot. Let the limousine driver drive. Let the professional disc jockey provide the soundtrack for your once-in-a-lifetime reception.

Did you ever hear the old line about "making or breaking the reception"? What do you think they were talking about? A smart bride once said, "Good entertainment isn't cheap and cheap entertainment isn't good".

So, you want to have an iPod wedding? Are you kidding? **MB**

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EXIT STRATEGIES

How to count the costs of selling out: one DJ's extensive experience

By Nunzio de Pasquale

Unlike the typical DJ profile you might find in these pages—taking a look at a DJ's career from its beginnings to the present day—this is a story of the end, or rather the multiple ends of a number of successful forays into mobile entertainment. Andy Ebon's serial DJ careers not only provide the basis for his current success as a web marketing consultant to entertainers, they offer some interesting and eye-opening "exit" experiences.

RIDING THE FIRST MOBILE DJ WAVE

Upon moving to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1976, Andy Ebon already had four years of night-club DJ work under his belt. A year later, Andy and business partner Scott Foell, founded Music Man Mobile Disco. The launch of Music Man preceded the release of the film *Saturday Night Fever* by just a couple of months. Surfing successfully on the disco tsunami, Music Man quickly became a full time operation. Positioned as a two-system, high-end service, booking activity soared to more than 300 gigs annually.

In late 1981, Foell suggested to Ebon that they sell Music Man. Both men, exhausted from their collective success, decided it was time to move on. Quietly, they marketed the sale, and quickly found a willing buyer in Terry Paullin, of the San Jose-based, Terry's Traveling Music Show. Paullin acquired Music Man, as a strategy to expand his own business overnight.

FROM BURNOUT TO SELL-OFF

Ebon told *Mobile Beat* that the decision to sell was "spontaneous, and due mostly to burnout." At only

29, Ebon was experiencing what felt like a mid-life crisis, and looked to more traditional business avenues. His avid interest in entrepreneurship drove him toward a real estate license, which allowed him to work as a business broker, and soon as a San Francisco real estate agent. While he became successful as a real estate agent and mortgage broker, within just a few months, Ebon knew he had made a mistake.

His DJ career had not reached its end; he was simply "suffering from success." Ebon and Foell had overworked themselves, rarely taking a

day off or vacation. Foell was comfortable in his new, post-DJ career; Ebon was not.

Concurrent with real estate sales, he had satisfied his music interests by returning to the Berkeley Marina Marriott as their lounge DJ, and taught college part-time. Ebon also taught a variety of business classes at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising, even garnering a Faculty Merit Award for his inspirational teaching of entrepreneurship.

Once he made the decision to get back behind the decks, there was one factor limiting him: He had signed a 5-year non-competition with Paullin, new owner of Music Man.

SUCCESS (AGAIN) IN THE DIGITAL ERA

As the non-competition period waned, Ebon observed the dawning of compact discs, sensed an opportunity, and planned his return to mobile music. His new incarnation would be Designer Music - Compact Disc DJ Service. Although he was convinced that Designer Music would be another instant success, the return to business proved much more challenging.

Music Man had been one of only a handful of mobile DJ leaders in the Bay Area. By the time Designer Music launched, in late 1996, dozens

of operations were vying for the same entertainment dollar. However, in Designer Music's second year, as consumers bought compact disc players in significant numbers, the distinct difference of digital sound proved to be a huge winner. Competitors were hesitant to retool, and Ebon's business surged once again. His three-system, four-DJ company grew to an impressive annual mark of 400 gigs.

In 1993, the San Francisco Small Business Network even recognized Ebon as San Francisco Small Business Owner of the Year. It was considered quite a coup for a non-traditional business to garner mainstream recognition.

Yet, during the next year, Ebon pondered the evolving world of fly girls, karaoke, and intelligent lighting. He decided that status quo was boring, and moving in new industry directions did not appeal to him. This time he was done, for good.

FROM ENTREPRENEUR TO EMPLOYEE...AND BACK AGAIN

Repeating the same selling successful strategy as he used for Music Man, Ebon made a deal to sell Designer Music to Brian Doyle (Denon & Doyle). The deal closed very quickly, and Ebon was happily unemployed. His stated goal was to "get a day

job" but Ebon's friends cautioned him; as if singing in unison, all his close friends reminded him that he had been self-employed most of his adult life, and would likely have a tough time adjusting to being an employee. They would be correct.

The transition from successful entrepreneur to employee was a trainwreck. Ebon went through four jobs in just over two years: marketing director at a lighting and event services company, general manager at a convention personnel service, director of sales and marketing at a wedding planning software company, and general manager at a digital music and message on-hold service.

Unfortunately, one casualty of his failed transition was his marriage. An otherwise happy relationship hit bottom as Ebon struggled to forge a fresh identity in a new field of endeavor.

Enough failure under his belt, Ebon launched EBS Virtual Communications, a small business consultancy. With some luck and good timing, he plugged into the mid-'90s explosion of the Internet, focusing on web development and electronic marketing. In 2007, he narrowed his concentration to wedding industry marketing (starting The Wedding Marketing Network and The Wedding Marketing Blog), and has enjoyed new success in consulting, speaking, and writing.

Sage Advice on Developing an Exit Strategy

Consider your reasons for selling:

Are you exhausted or do you just need time off? Should you sell or restructure? If you're a sole proprietor, should you have a partner? What's your balance between business operator and performer, and might this be modified?

Listen to your closest friends: The people who know you best (the ones that will tell you the truth) are often the best sounding boards. Understanding how people see you can be enlightening.

Develop a plan for selling or digging in: Talk quietly and confidentially with your friends, significant other, confidants, a career consultant, a mentor—in short, your trusted counselors. Ask them to listen, and get lots of feedback. If you have a business partner, go on a 3-day retreat. At the end of this exercise, you could well either have a 5-year plan for retooling your business or a 1-year plan for transition.

Slow down and reconsider: Marinate any decision

for at least a few days, or better yet, a week or two. Take your own sweet time, and see if you feel any remorse about your plans to move forward or sell. You are considering big changes, regardless of what you have chosen. Don't confuse excitement with certainty.

Selling is one thing; your next career is another: Ebon underscores that selling his two mobile DJ businesses turned out to be the easiest part of transition. Unlike his path, he recommends spending far more time examining the next phase of your career than on selling the business.

Entrepreneurs not welcome: If you are not starting a new business, you may find employers skeptical. They assume that you will want to go off on your own, again, at some point. This is a healthy skepticism. Have clear, concise answers.

Non-compete agreements: It's reasonable for a buyer to ask for, and receive, a non-compete agreement. 2-5 years is reasonable, depending on what you are being paid. Even if you're certain about selling today, you don't want to be stuck with an excessively long agreement (just in case you

change your mind, later).

When it's time to go, it's time to go: Once you have made a decision to sell, momentum picks up steam, quickly. Therefore, deciding what you will do next, should be the first priority.

Look within the industry: The best buyer will be a friendly competitor, who can benefit from adding bookings and complementary categories of business to their company. Used equipment counts, but not as much as you might think.

Non-disclosure agreement: It's a small fraternity of companies within your market. Have potential buyers sign a non-disclosure agreement.

Consult your accountant and attorney, going in: Get a clear understanding about how you might structure a sale, both for tax and deal making purposes, before you talk with any potential buyers.

Don't look back: Despite how much good advice you have to offer, new owners will ignore it. They are certain they know more than you. Your primary concern should be securing the sale with real property (such as a home) and that your checks clear. Focus your energy

on your new enterprise.

Caution: Selling a business means losing your identity: When you sell your business, particularly if you are a visible and longstanding owner, it will be a shock to your persona. Engraving a new business identity for yourself, in the minds of your peers, is a lengthy and annoying process.

In today's mobile music industry, there are many avenues for expanding your work, or you can keep it simple. Ultimately, you have to know yourself best. All the best advice and feedback have their limits. It is essential understand yourself, your circumstances, motivations and aspirations.

In sports, it is often said that "Sometimes the best trades are the ones that are not made." That can be true when it comes to selling your business.

Ebon advises that you learn from his experiences and mistakes. He says, "Whether or when you consider a career change, be thorough and take your time. Proceed with caution, and acquired wisdom." **MB**

Karaoke

Past and Future

Empowering karaoke hosts and energizing the industry as it moves forward

By Eric Godfrey, President, US Karaoke Alliance

One of the most contentious areas of modern mobile and club entertainment has been karaoke. This pastime that floated across the Pacific from Japan, allowing audience members to be transformed for a few minutes into the stars of the show as they sing along with their favorite songs, has shown its staying power, despite the ridicule it has often suffered in the popular media. And, despite its ongoing legal difficulties, karaoke has continued to be a profitable enterprise for large numbers of KJs who regularly host karaoke shows, as well as for DJs who often rely on it as a primary add-on to their other entertainment services. A number of organizations have attempted to improve the situation for KJs and DJs; later in this article we'll take a look at the developing work of one of these, the US Karaoke Alliance. But first, a little background on the legal challenges involved in karaoke.

KARAOKE LEGAL HISTORY 101

Karaoke is not ever mentioned in the current US Copyright Law or in the Digital Millennium Act. This has led to widespread disagreements.

The Copyright Act defines "phonorecords" as "material objects in which sounds, other than those accompanying a motion picture or other audiovisual work, are fixed by any method now known or later developed, and from which the sounds can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device." (17 U.S.C. § 101.) "Audiovisual works" are defined as "works that consist of a series of related images which are intrinsically intended to be shown by the use of machines, or devices such as projectors, viewers, or electronic equipment, together with accompanying sounds, if any..."

When karaoke moved from cassettes with printed lyric sheets to CDs containing some pictures and graphic words scrolling on a screen and synced to the music (CD+Gs) this opened up legal disagreement and provided publishers with the ability to negotiate sync licenses at a negotiated rate per contract and the ability to say "no" to



karaoke manufacturers, unless they were willing to pay the fees requested for a negotiated license. The precedent for this was set by the 1996 case, *ABKCO Music, Inc. v. Stellar Records, Inc.*, where ABKCO sued on the grounds that Stellar could not just put out karaoke tracks with a Section 115 compulsory license filing, as compulsories were defined strictly as covering only “phonorecord” recordings. Under the terms of copyright law, they argued that the karaoke tracks more closely resembled the definition of “audiovisual works” and would require individual negotiated licenses for each track. The courts ruled in ABKCO’s favor, thus setting the precedent that karaoke track rights must be individually negotiated for permission and compensation.

In 2005, Rick Priddis of Priddis Music, a major karaoke music supplier, was quoted as saying, “The great irony in all of this is that the publishers, while claiming their actions are trying to root out pirates and willful infringers, are making sure that only the pirates will survive. The true infringers have never paid fees and never will. If this continues, those of us who have paid fees and royalties all along will be forced out of business, and then everybody loses.” His company was sued by EMI Publishing, and even though the initial judgment in Utah courts was that “sync licenses” are not required for karaoke products which display only the text of lyrics (according to U.S. District Judge Bruce S. Jenkins, “Absent a series of related visual images, e.g., a motion picture, film or video recording, the display of the lyrics represents the display of a ‘literary’ rather than ‘audiovisual’ work”), while the case was on appeal to a higher court, Priddis dropped out of the karaoke business and issued a joint statement with EMI acknowledging that sync licenses are required for karaoke tracks. Over the years, DK, Pioneer Karaoke, Music Maestro, Nutech, Backstage and many other smaller companies have followed suit and dropped their karaoke lines or gone out of business altogether, showing that Priddis was correct back in 2005. Today, the only major players remaining active in karaoke are Sound Choice, Stellar Records, Chartbuster, and Pocket Songs.

Earlier this year, the requirement for this negotiated license was upheld in California’s 9th Circuit Court when they ruled that in favor of BMI publishing in a lawsuit with karaoke electronic microphone system creator, Leadsinger. Leadsinger had filed for relief on the grounds that their digital chip-based system only required compulsories and reprint licenses for lyrics, but their claim was denied and then that decision was upheld upon appeal; it was ruled that since graphics and some images were provided on a screen attached to their system, they could be required to pay sync licenses. Leadsinger also argued that their use of tracks fell under “fair use,” but that claim was also not found to have enough merit to overturn the lower court decision.

The issue still lies in the fact that “audio visual synchronization licensing” was originally intended to apply to protect artists from having their works exploited for movies and commercials and tied to images of popular stars or products for financial gain. Display of lyrics on a screen is merely a technological advancement beyond display on paper and is designed simply to make

karaoke easier for the singer. It is nothing but a guide to a singer and is not what audio visual sync licensing was intended to cover, but a lack of any clarifying legislation has opened an opportunity for publishers to deny rights to release karaoke tracks and to demand larger fees. It is slowly forcing the legitimate karaoke companies out of business.

But there are brighter spots on the current karaoke horizon. It was mentioned in a previous *MB* issue that Sound Choice has agreed not to pursue legal actions for use of digital karaoke systems as long as companies can provide proof of one-for-one copies of content versus number of shows being run simultaneously. This is a reversal of their previous position and is a huge development in the KJ world—a true offering of an olive branch to KJs using digital content previously considered problematic. Our perception is that Sound Choice is embracing the new technology and is willing to work together with KJs to better the industry; we greatly appreciate it.

TRANSFORMING KARAOKE

A number of organizations are now working from slightly different angles to help better the world of KJs and rejuvenate the industry. The **Karaoke Industry Alliance of America (www.thekiaa.org)** has a stated goal to “foster a favorable business climate that equally supports and promotes the interests of all its members,” which include manufacturers, distributors, KJ/DJ hosts, venue owners and karaoke enthusiasts. (See the KIAA website for more info and a complete mission statement.)

My organization, the **US Karaoke Alliance (www.uskaraokealliance.com)**, aims to help KJs that are doing business legitimately so they can make more money for their shows, better run their businesses, and provide a means to combat the companies that are doing business illegally. In the past, single companies tried running “regulatory” associations, but were not truly successful due to a lack of any consolidated enforcement efforts. The US Karaoke Alliance is working to unify the efforts of KJs, retailers, enthusiasts and all of the major disc manufacturers to develop some real enforcement actions and get rid of those who have no desire to do business ethically and legally. In the long run, as we build membership and cultivate a steadily growing organization, we hope to have enough impact to either get consolidated agreements from publishers or get some sort of legislation that will define licensing of karaoke tracks once and for all.

If we can create enough of an infrastructure and a united front of karaoke enthusiasts, we feel that a new type of compulsory license for karaoke can be established with the major labels, either via agreement or via legislation. We must first learn to work together and self-police our industry so that we can show the publishers that we are worthy of their time and consideration. When dealing with people that release multi-million selling recordings, we must provide a system that is capable of showing them a financial gain in the future.

The USKA will work on KJ education, compliance with copyright issues, enforcement and investigation of infringement, and providing tools for KJs to better run their businesses. We will

Building a Solid Karaoke Industry

The US Karaoke Alliance is developing a full menu of member benefits:

- Ability to have a cursory or in-depth audit of karaoke libraries conducted for certification of companies status. (Companies that are certified will have this added to their profiles and their listings will move to a higher point on lists made available to clubs looking for legal karaoke hosts.)

- Ability to subscribe to ongoing monthly karaoke releases from major vendors for each set of music. Since it is via a private, membership-based program and not open to the general public, karaoke monthly releases will be below normal MAP price points. Those subscribing will also have this added to their profile and will show higher in listings on various websites for finding hosts.

- Liability insurance for business to protect venues, and availability of equipment and music coverage as well.

- Discounted rates on business management and website hosting products via strategic partners.

- Discounted rates on search engine listings of karaoke shows and hosting company databases.

- Bi-monthly newsletter with updates on industry happenings and special offers from national karaoke retailers.

- Central contact point for companies wishing to set up plans and work with major karaoke disc manufacturers to pay for content and bring all libraries into 100% alignment with disc manufacturer policies. (Some older songs can no longer be licensed; however, manufacturers are currently developing plans for “covenants not to sue” or agreements to accept existing digital content and not pursue copyright infringement suits.)

New benefits will be added over time as membership and resources expand.

be developing a database-driven website structure that will provide many benefits to karaoke hosting companies, venues and karaoke enthusiasts. The ultimate aim is to offer a single contact point/resource to coordinate payment plans with disc manufacturers, and a secondary source to audit karaoke company libraries for compliance.

For more information or to get involved, go to www.uskaraokealliance.com. Let’s all work together to fix the problems that confront the karaoke industry. **MB**

Tips for Beginners

DJ G. Brown shares ideas for club spinning success

DJ Pioneers such as D-Nice and the late Jam Master Jay have paved the way for such notables as DJ AM, DJ Cassidy and DJ G. Brown. For newcomers climbing the ladder, it takes persistence and knowing the ins and outs of DJing techniques to become successful. World-renowned DJ G. Brown shares some tips for beginners on what you need to become one of the world's top club DJs:

MASTER YOUR TOOLS - Whether you're using traditional turntables, CD turntables or a laptop based software, it's important that you learn how to use it from top to bottom. This is especially important for your mixer as well. Unfortunately, many times you'll find yourself experiencing technical difficulties at gigs, and your knowledge of your equipment will make the difference between finishing the night or calling it a night.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK - Music is the key ingredient to any DJ set, so make sure to take the time to dig deep into every type of music that interests you. The deeper the crates, the better the set.

PRACTICE PRACTICE PRACTICE - Just like riding a bike, you won't be ready for the Tour De France after toying around for a week. The more hours you put in, the more it will pay off in the end. I'd recommend watching videos of the top DJ's you admire and use that as a study tool. Also, if possible, go out and listen to other DJ's in the clubs to see if there's anything you can learn by watching how and what they play, and the audience response.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE - If you plan on killing it in the clubs, you will need to know what moves your audience. Being a DJ does not mean playing for yourself. If that's what you want, then stay home and DJ in your bedroom. Interacting with your audience is the key to success. Pay attention to the crowd's response to the records you drop. If you hear people scream, whistle or get up on tables and start dancing when you bring in a particular song, then you know you are doing something right.

KEEP PEOPLE ON THEIR TOES - There's nothing worse than a predictable DJ. Over the years, I've been told by many club owners that one of their biggest pet peeves is a DJ who plays the same exact set every night. I go out of my way, intentionally, to never play the same set twice. If I come up with a hot transition between two records, I will usually run with that same transition for a few weeks, but after that, I put it on the back burner for random special occasions. **MB**

G. Brown has piqued the curiosity of the crème de la crème of New York with rotations and residencies at local celebrity hotspots Tenjune, Upstairs, 1Oak, Bungalow 8, Butter, Marquee and Pink Elephant in the Hamptons. He attracts an A-list audience, which regularly include the likes of Diddy, Paris Hilton, Jennifer Lopez, Lindsay Lohan, Bono, Britney Spears, Mick Jagger, Timbaland, Justin Timberlake and many more. He was also ranked one of the top DJs in 2007 by New York Magazine and has won numerous acknowledgements and awards in the music arena.



Flipping for Fun

Mobile flipbook producer sizzles as entertainment innovation

Remember when, as a child, you would draw stick figures at the corner of your notebook or sticky notes, and then flip the pages with your fingers, creating the effect of your own handmade cartoon?

Back then, a flipbook was a way to kill time when you were bored in third-grade math class. Fast forward to today, when an innovative company has combined the simple pleasure of flipbooks with the latest video and computing technology to create one of the hottest new concepts in party entertainment.

That company, Dallas/Fort Worth-area-based PicFlips, has become the breakout trend among those planning events, averaging almost three events per weekend in the region and attracting a legion of licensees nationwide. More than 25 licenses have been awarded, with more coming every month as the network expands. Non-exclusive licensees are currently in 11 states, including California, New York, Arizona and Texas.

PicFlips creates custom flipbooks at weddings, corporate events, non-profit fundraisers, bar/bat mitzvahs, proms and other parties. Owners, Shawn and Amy Kelly, and their staff use a patent-pending video/printing/collating process on-site to produce a flipbook in less than 90 seconds. PicFlips averages 40 flipbooks per hour.

PicFlips' process, which has been submitted to the U.S. Patent Office, is surprisingly simple, yet provides a unique keepsake for party-goers.

A person, couple or group makes a short video clip inside the 10-foot-by-10-foot mobile flipbook studio. If they need help getting their creative juices flowing, they can use a variety of provided props - feather boas, wacky hats, huge sunglasses and sturdy signs with funny and sweet messages - "Double Trouble," "Wild Thing" and "I Love You."

"People can express themselves and cut loose with friends, family or coworkers," Shawn said. "To customize the flipbook even further, our

software allows for up to 80 characters to scroll across the bottom of the flipbook. This is a great addition to an interactive marketing campaign."

After the video is shot, the technology kicks in. The proprietary, specially-written software converts the video into about 60 images - think frames in a film or an animation cell - and prints them out. The images are sent through the cutter, which also collates them into the correct order. The book is completed with a customized cover to match the event and a large staple to bind the book.

"It's instant gratification," Amy said with a smile. "When we first started doing events, people used to ask us if we were going to send them the flipbook in the mail. They watched in amazement as we created it right in front of them. Then, of course, they ran off with their flipbook in hand to recruit their friends to make one. It really creates a buzz."

Other companies make custom flipbooks, but they don't have the ability to create them outside of their facility. PicFlips is completely mobile.

"What sets us apart is our ability to do the flipbooks on-site," Shawn said. "This software has been designed as an event application. Other technology is designed for animators."

"A lot of clients and event planners book us because we're so versatile," Amy commented. "It's hard to find an interactive party favor that can fit into so many different applications - trendy weddings, spooky Halloween parties or morale-boosting company parties."

That versatility also helps attract licensees. "We got such a great response from doing our own events that we decided to make it available to other companies across the globe," Shawn said. "We have the software designed for security, so no one can run off with it or duplicate it. It's also a business that people can get into for less than \$10,000."

Added Amy: "The process is pretty simple once you learn it. We have a team of incredible college kids who do the events for us when we are not available. Our process is easy to learn and operate, and we typically only use two staff per event. It's not hard to find willing college kids who need the cash and a fun temporary job."



Licensees receive the proprietary software; a key to operate the software on one computer; software updates as they become available; a procedural handbook; a supplier list for needed equipment such as a computer, camera, cutter and printers; and a stamp to crease the covers.

It is a strict license - the Kellys do not want to get involved in franchising. Licensees do not use the PicFlips name; they run the operation under their existing business name or a new name and set their own prices. They are also free to travel outside of their own area, as there are no set territories.

At a time when brilliantly animated movies seem to pop out of the screen, it's fun to return to the simple animation that makes it all possible. Sometimes, the simple things in life are what we find most interesting. **MB**

For information about PicFlips licensing, contact Shawn at 817-422-6527 or shawn@picflips.biz.



The DJ Universe

Bigger Than You Think!

A brief introduction to *The Complete Disc Jockey*,
an upcoming title from ProDJ Publishing **By Stu Chisholm**

You can't force inspiration. You never know when it will hit you or where it will lead. Like most things in life, I was inspired by a specific event at a very specific point in time; a small seed planted in fertile soil. That proverbial soil didn't seem so fertile at the time! I was researching an article about the impact that our faltering economy was having on the DJ industry ("The Frill Is Gone," *Mobile Beat*, May 2007). Since I live in Michigan, where the country's economic recession began, I focused on Michigan DJs, calling dozens of colleagues from across the state. The biggest surprise didn't come from how hard our industry has been hit, but by how many former full-time DJs were forced to take a dreaded day job—some I've known for decades. "I can't fool around," a female colleague told me, "I've got kids and need to have health care coverage and money for their college fund." She'd been full-time for about as long as I could remember.

Even more surprising, though, was the kind of jobs these DJs were taking. One somehow managed to land a job at Ford, which isn't easy these days. Others got involved in the computer field. Another was managing a local steak house restaurant, and yet another was selling insurance. Story after story of DJs working in retail, office, fast food and factory jobs revealed a trend that would become the foundation for what was to come.

ACT II, SCENE I

When working on my own DJ business, I tend to look at how others have handled similar problems or situations before going off on my own. One day I had a particular problem on my mind (I forget exactly what it was now), and I'd scoured several online forums with no luck. It was time to hit my bookshelf.

Looking over all the titles, I realized something beyond my immediate concern: there were a lot of books about radio on my shelf. There were also a good number of books on mobile DJ work. Yet in all those volumes, there was little to nothing beyond. I began to think of all of the other types of DJ work I've done over the years: all of the bar and nightclub work; the car cruises I've ran; the roller skating rink; the beauty pageant

The Complete DJ: Live

As a little incentive to arrive early for the Mobile Beat DJ Show, Stu will be presenting a seminar on Monday, February 17th. Based on his book, the title of the seminar is: *Supplement Your DJ Income...With DJ Income!* In these tough economic times, having the "big picture" outlook on the DJ industry may be just what you need to guide you to that essential second job without resorting to non-industry pursuits. It can also just as easily be the way for a bored DJ in a dead-end position to put all of his/her skills, talent and learning to their best use with new challenges and situations.

I provided sound and emcee services for; the cruise ship where my friend worked; the ice arena where I've presided over both hockey games and figure skating competitions; karaoke nights; the voiceover jobs running the gamut from radio commercials to on-hold telephone messages; working the "gentlemen's" clubs; recording and remixing; hospital radio...and on and on. Where were the books on those?

AHA!

That's when I had my own "light bulb moment," as Oprah likes to call them. That little seed of observation—looking at my bookshelf and the gap in material on the wider world of DJ work—dropped into the "soil" of our soft economy and how many DJs had gone into non-industry related jobs. Suddenly I was filled with questions: Why wasn't there a book that detailed these other areas of the DJ world? Why did so many of the DJs I spoke with turn to non-entertainment jobs rather than look for other DJ options? Did they even know about or consider them? And why hadn't someone tied all of it together in a single book? After a quick session with Google, I realized that there was no such volume. If I wanted one, I would simply have to write it myself!

ONE-STOP SHOPPING

Back in those ancient, long-ago days when I was in elementary school, we had "general" textbooks. Rather than having separate English, Math, Social Studies/History and Science books, we would have a single volume that covered everything we'd need to learn of those fields in the semester we had before us. I always liked that idea, because each subject was in concise, easily digested chunks that weren't overwhelming. They were far from exhaustive, but usually had the essentials along with references to other books and materials if we wanted to get more in-depth later on. Since every DJ shares at least some techniques with all others, I decided that this would be an ideal format for a book on the wider realm of the DJ.

So the spine of my book became those shared skills: public speaking, verbal technique, writing and personality development. (Yes, you CAN develop your personality!) Overcoming fear and stage fright, mic techniques and interaction would be the springboard for everything else.

From this spine would hang all of the various paths that a DJ may take, along with those things that differentiate them from other entertainers. To a DJ, this is the equivalent of

specialization in the medical profession; you have your general practitioners, and then there are the specialists. They have a different focus, audience or circumstance that requires a different skill set, disciplines and even tools to accomplish their goals. Each deserves a detailed treatment.

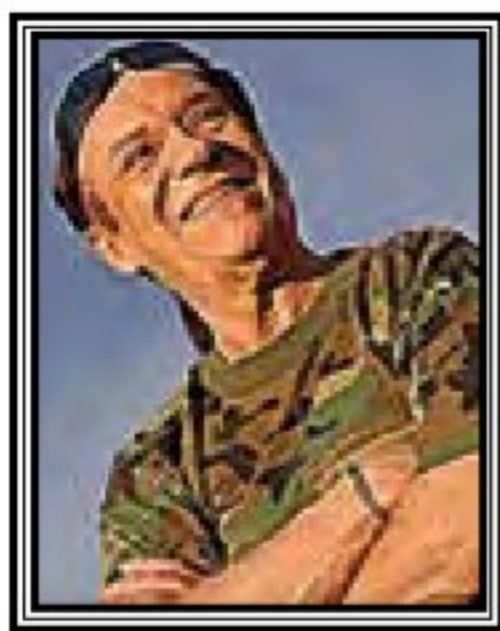
As I gathered together all of this information, it triggered memories of my own career and the various twists and turns it has taken. I soon decided that my book would need a more human touch; some stories from personal experience that related directly to the more "dry" facts and figures. As a result, at the end of each chapter I've included what I call "Musical Memoirs—Tales from the Trenches." They run the range from horrible to humorous, and are all 100% true. Even if you're not a DJ and never intend to be one, you'll find these an entertaining read.

CHECK PLEASE!

Writing this book turned out to be one of the most fun and rewarding experiences of my life. I had the opportunity and privilege of speaking with an incredible range of talented people from all over the country and added even more to this ol' dog's bag of DJ tricks!

As I was wrapping-up my little project, the icing on the cake came in the form of an almost casual e-mail reply from one such talented person; the one and only Mark Ferrell, the west coast DJ who is most famous for his "Getting What You're Worth" presentations and a regular contributor to DJA Radio, the internet radio hot-spot for mobile DJs. He graciously agreed to use part of his Thanksgiving Day holiday to write the forward. My anticipation (and a deadline!) made those few days waiting for it to arrive seem like an eternity. When it did finally appear, it was well worth the wait. Mark gave a picturesque, detailed insight into his own early experiences that led him to be a DJ and his jump from one segment of the industry to many others over the years. Simply put, it's the perfect start for the book I had in mind; the book now entitled *The Complete Disc Jockey*. By the time you read this, it will be available through ProDJ Publishing at the Mobile Beat website and will also be presented at the Mobile Beat show in Las Vegas!

I'm confident that wherever you are in your career path, you'll find yourself, past, future or present, somewhere in-between the covers of *The Complete Disc Jockey*. **MB**



When to Halt a Marketing Attack

If you have to ask, you're probably not a true guerilla

By Jay Conrad Levinson

The day you close the doors to your business is the only smart time to halt a guerrilla marketing attack. No other day is a good day for quitting.

A concept for you to embrace is that a guerrilla marketing attack is neverending. It has a beginning and a middle—but never an end, for it is a process. You improve it, perfect it, change it, even pause in it. But you never stop it completely.

STAYING IN TOUCH

Of all the steps in succeeding with a guerrilla marketing attack, three of them take the most time. You spend a relatively brief time developing the attack and inaugurating it, but you spend the life of your business maintaining, monitoring and improving your attack. At no point should you ever take anything for granted. At no point should you fall into the pit of self-satisfaction because your attack is working. Never forget that others—very smart and motivated competitors—are studying you and doing their utmost to surpass you in the marketing arena.

Guerrillas thrive and prosper because they understand the deeper meanings of the phrases “customer base” and “long-term commitment.” They know that “relationship marketing” is more than a buzz phrase. This enables them to reinvent their marketing—just as long as they are firm in their commitment to their existing customers and prospects. An attack without flexibility is in danger of failing. But that flexibility does not

allow you to take your eyes off the needs of your customers.

Keep alert for new niches at which you can aim your attack. Large companies don't have the luxury of profiting from a narrow niche. But no matter how successful your attack, never lose contact with your customers. If you do, you lose your competitive advantage over huge companies that have too many layers of bureaucracy for personal contact. Guerrilla marketing is always authentic marketing and never acts or feels to be impersonal, by-the-number marketing. It never feels like selling.

Marketing Management author Philip Kotler says “Authentic marketing

is not the art of selling what you make but knowing what to make. It is the art of identifying and understanding customer needs and creating solutions that deliver satisfaction to the customers, profits to the producers and benefits for the stakeholders. Market innovation is gained by creating customer satisfaction through product innovation, product quality and customer service. If these are absent, no amount of advertising, sales promotion or salesmanship can compensate.”

Your attack must be characterized by a very strong tie with your own target audience. You know them. You serve them. They know it. Guerrilla attacks do not suffer from your lack of resources, but instead prosper because lack of capital makes you more willing to try new and innovative ideas—concepts ripe for guerrillas but not for huge companies.

SHARP FOCUS

Your marketing attack, and I use the word “attack” to plant the idea of aggressiveness into your brain, will succeed in direct relationship to how “narrow-minded” you can be. Guerrillas have the insight that precision strengthens an attack.

They know the enormous difference between their prospects and their prime prospects. They are aware of the gigantic chasm separating their customers from their best customers. This perspective enables them to narrow their aim only to the best prospects that marketing money can buy and the finest customers ever to grace their customer list. They treat all customers like royalty. They treat their best customers like family.

They are fully cognizant that it doesn't take much more work to sell a subscription to a magazine than to sell a single issue. That's why their marketing attack is devoted to motivating people to subscribe to their businesses mentally.

Once they have a customer, they do all they can to intensify the relationship, and they do not treat all customers and prospects equally. Consider the menswear chain with a database of 47,000 names. Mailings are never more than 3,000 at a time. Who receives the mail? Says the owner, “Only the people appropriate to mail to.” When he received trousers of a specific style, he mailed only to those customers to whom he was certain they'd appeal—and enjoyed a 30% response rate.

The cost of his mailing was a tiny fraction of the size of his profits. There's not a chance of reveling in a healthy response like that unless you're targeting your mailing with absolute preci-

sion. It's something you're going to have to do in a world where postal charges and paper prices are both slated to increase. Unless you're hitting the bullseye, you're wasting your marketing investment.

Your ongoing attack should be centered around helping. You've got to market ultra-selectively and comprehensively. Think not in terms of selling or befriending as much as helping. This means zeroing in on your best prospects and staying with them once they've been identified as prime. Will it take three approaches to win them over? Or will it take three years? Both answers will win out over those who think they can contact less-than-prime customers only one time, who think they can use scattershot, broad-based, imprecise marketing.

The benefit of precision is that it allows you to get personal. Recall the non-profit organization that increased its response rate 668% by giving its big donors some special attention: mailing to them with a handwritten envelope using a commemorative stamp and a handwritten 25-word note at the end of the letter. The cost to do this was low, indeed. But the payoff proved the value of precision and narrow-mindedness in a guerrilla marketing attack. Precision and constancy. Those are your allies. **MB**



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and Guerilla Marketing International
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bestselling Guerilla Marketing book by
Jay Conrad Levinson

Andy Powell is the National Sales
Director for Mobile Beat Magazine and
ProDJ.Com (ProDJ Publishing). He has a
background in consumer and commercial
lending and marketing. He is a former
professional baseball mascot where he
acquired his nickname "Cubbie" that
everyone still calls him to this day. He got
his start in the ProDJ family as a DJ. From
there he was able to help grow the local
DJ business over 50% which enabled ProDJ Publishing to purchase Mobile Beat
Magazine and Trade Shows. Since starting with Mobile Beat he has been able
to work with many new and established companies to help them launch new
products and strengthen their presence in the mobile DJ industry. When he is
not traveling looking for new products for the DJ Market he enjoys spending
time with his family. He really enjoys working for ProDJ Publishing and if you
don't believe it, just ask him for his business card...it will tell you "He is just a
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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

moval. I played the clean version, which sounded ridiculous, as nearly every other word was edited out. Of course playing that song and others made me, the DJ, look like an idiot to the older guests.

And a word on the use of "F-bombs" in lyrics. After the first one was dropped in a song, the shock value was spent, and in my opinion any other use of it is just lazy songwriting.

Here's part of the problem. It's called "attractive nuisance," which is explained at Wikipedia as "a hazardous object or condition...that is likely to attract children, who are unable to appreciate the risk posed." Example: earlier this year, at another school, I was setting up to do a sock-hop and a young male student came up to talk to me. He asked me if I was going to play song X. I responded that I couldn't play it because it had curse words in it and I showed him the warning mark on my CD label. His response put it in perspective for me: "That's what makes it fun!" I guess I can understand that, but when a songs depict sexual acts in such graphic detail as I mentioned earlier, then I for one think it's crossed the line.

And thank goodness for warning labels on my CD cases, but sadly it seems that every new CD I get, about half the songs have the warnings on them! Note to artists: Do us all a favor and keep your personal sex life in your bedroom; I for one don't want to hear about it. As a professional mobile DJ, I'm telling you that I absolutely refuse to play any song that tells me about your private sex life.

In 1985, 37 popular music artists joined together to help starving people in Africa. They produced a song called "We Are the World," which featured heartfelt lyrics like: "There's a choice we're making, we're saving our own lives / it's true we make a better day, you and me." This song was number one in 14 countries around the world and raised over 65 million dollars for famine relief! My challenge to present day music artists: Make a choice to use your talents to have a positive impact on our society. I encourage you to join our new president and make a change for the better. Right now, we need you more than ever. The world needs you. What legacy are you going to leave for the next generation? —Mike Ryan

Mike, just for the record, Soulja Boy has gone on record denying the allegedly obscene meaning of his lyrics (<http://www.hiphopdx.com/index/news/id.5971/title.soulja-boy-debunks-superman-dat-hoe-rumors>). Of course that doesn't change the fact that so much of today's music—and not just rap—contains material that is inappropriate for different mobile DJ audience segments. Which sometimes makes playing for a wide age range at many events a real problem. Hopefully some artists will take your challenge and create a movement toward positive change! —Ed.

BUZZ ON THE BOARDS: DJS AND DRINKING

On a regular basis, we post poll questions in the forums at Start.ProDJ.Com (<http://start.prodj.com>). One such poll, originally posted in April 2008, continues to generate responses. Question: "Do you drink while 'on duty' as a DJ?" Answer choices: "Yes (regardless of how often) / No / Only in the past (not now or any more)." Poll results as of press time: Yes: 28.83% / No: 60.36% / Past: 10.81%. As you'll see, it's a perennial hot-button issue, with replies focusing on different aspects of this decision—not just the issue of "public perception" but also handling social customs, and the serious matter of drunk driving.

Maybe it's where I live but I do frown upon getting drunk at any event! But I do let my employees have a drink outside of toasts and after formalities at a wedding. Simple psychology, if you have a drink with you then guests are less likely to buy you one. Where I live if you turn down a drink offer you're a [expletive deleted]. I actually find this to be the best way of avoiding confrontation in that situation! Again it depends on timing and the scenerio! And never get drunk! Not a fan of it anytime!

In which other "professions" is consuming alcohol on the job acceptable (besides wine taster or beer tester)?

How about every CEO in the country who wishes to drink? Ever heard of the 2-martini lunch? Even BlueCross/BlueShield employees are allowed alcohol during lunch; it's in their employee manual. I know many salesmen who land their biggest sales while WINING and dining their clients (not to mention buying lap dances). Who really cares as long as you look professional? (No shotgunning, funnelling or keg stands please, and don't leave your empties laying about.) Never had an issue with it...

Now, who thinks it is OK to get drunk at an event? No one here, hopefully.

It's entirely situational...if offered, it depends on the event and how I feel at the moment.

Since I do drink when I want to in everyday life (just stating that I'm not opposed to a drink now and then, not saying I'm a drunk...LOL), I'd never insult a client by arguing over a single drink for a toast or just to be accepting of their hospitality.

No drinking for me—doesn't mix well with my medication! Sometimes, we've had clients INSIST that I share a drink with them. In that case, my hubby will "step up to the plate." He'll enjoy a drink with them for me. What a nice guy!

No no NO. Drinking is NOT acceptable, no matter WHAT the situation. God forbid in this "sue-happy society" if for whatever reason you are sued and it is brought up that you were seen DRINKING at the event...Call me paranoid or being proactive, but it is MY choice to not provide ANY ammunition for such people. **MB**

Remember, if you want to join the conversation, head over to the forums at Start.ProDJ.Com and register to add your voice.—Ed.

Pumped Up to Play

NFL AND NHL PUMP UP FANS WITH MUSIC OF BMI SONGWRITERS

"Pump It," recorded by the Black Eyed Peas, was the most-performed song at National Football League (NFL) and National Hockey League (NHL) games last season, according to Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI).

"Sports teams use 'Pump It' to fire up crowds and get them chanting and dancing for the home team," said Del Bryant, BMI President and CEO. "Sports fans feel great when this song is playing, regardless of the score."

Co-writers on the song include Black Eyed Peas members will.i.am and apl.de.ap, along with Thomas Van Musser. The song appears on the group's album *Monkey Business*, released in 2005.

BMI is the largest performing right organization in America. The company collects and distributes royalties for more than 375,000 songwriters, composers and music publishers, who own 6.5 million musical works, more than half the music currently played in the United States.

BMI pays songwriters annually for songs performed during the preceding sports season and recently distributed royalties for the 2007-2008 stretch of NFL and NHL games. Using reports provided by teams, BMI tallies and distributes royalties based on the number of performances each song receives during games, including the Pro Bowl and Super Bowl. Royalties for specific song performances are determined by game attendance and size of licensing fees paid by the teams. More than 1,600 song titles were captured in the reports, which covered the period from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

"Twilight Zone" claims the second spot on the list. A heart-thumping rap written by Jean-Paul DeCoster and Phil Wilde, "Twilight Zone" was released in 1992 by 2 Unlimited, a band from the Netherlands. The third most popular song at NFL and NHL games is "Pretender," co-written and recorded by Foo Fighters members Dave Grohl, Chris Shiflett and Nate Mendel. Rounding out the top ten most-performed BMI sports songs are "Song 2," "We Will Rock You," "Stronger," "Cowboys from Hell," "Machinehead," "Woof" and "Black Betty." **MB**

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No Power? No Problem!

New England DJ proves that even without electricity, there can be entertainment

By Michael Edwards

I woke up on Friday, December 12, 2008 to a cold house and no power. A freak ice storm had hit overnight and an incredible 800,000 homes in Massachusetts and New Hampshire were without any power, heat or telephone service. The heavy rains all night had left a build-up of ice that had toppled hundreds of trees, telephone poles and power lines, and both states declared a full state of emergency. It was still raining sleet and ice as I squinted in the early morning half-light to check my wrist watch for the time. I had a rare Friday "double" booked, to play for two corporate holiday parties that day. I was scheduled to start the first one, for a brand new client, at 11:30 AM about 30 miles away, and then play again elsewhere from 7:00 to 11:00 PM for an established annual client.

I called both the venues by cell phone. The evening venue had full power and was good to go, but the morning venue's phones were out. I tried that AM client as well, but their line was out too. I had no choice but to get ready and drive to the venue.



Undaunted, I left my DJ gear in the van and brought in only my prop cases.

SKATING AWAY...

Luckily, I have a cordless shaver at home and a battery back-up for my electric garage door openers, so I was able to clean up, dress and get the van out without any problem. I left for the first gig at 8:30 AM, allowing a whopping three hours for travel and set up, just in case the storm got worse or a sudden detour was needed.

Interestingly, the human resources director for that morning's client had called earlier in the week to ask for suggestions on how to give away some prizes to the employees. I told her I could make it fun with various contests and interactive games that would not only help award the gifts, but make the event more fun and memorable. "Knowing our group, they won't participate," she replied icily, "so we'd prefer it if you just play the music and pick employee names from a hat every half hour and give the gifts out that way."

"Great," I thought at the time, "Another 'people expert' who pays for entertainment and then doesn't want to use it." To all those HR directors out there who have to plan company parties: Please don't ever assume something cannot be accomplished just because you personally do not have the skills needed to accomplish it. That's what I wanted to say to this particular party planner, but I just politely said "OK."

BREAKING THE ICE

When I arrived (very early), there was no power at the venue. No lights and no heat, but luckily, they cooked by gas, so there would be hot food. The client had no way to cancel or even reach all the employees and they were told by the manager of the venue that the food had to be paid for, even if they rescheduled. They decided to go ahead with the party. The power company had said it would be "days," not hours, before the power would be restored.

Even if I had brought a gas-powered generator, the second floor location and safety regulations regarding required distance from the building due to carbon monoxide (CO) fumes would have made it nearly impossible to power my sound system. Undaunted, I left my DJ gear in the van and brought in only my prop cases. Guests arrived on time as the rain ended.

The first hour (cocktails) passed quickly with the help of 50 lottery scratch tickets that the cli-

ent provided for me to award with roving trivia questions and humorous comments out amongst the mingling guests. I didn't have the luxury of a microphone, but years of public speaking has helped to teach me to project my voice as needed. This hour broke down the social walls very nicely. Free drink tickets also helped warm things up a bit.

Next came the buffet, where I used the old "stand up and sing a Christmas song" routine for the next table to be called. Once the guests were all back and seated with their hot food, I passed out paper and pens (adorned with my company name, logo and phone number, of course) and initiated a table challenge trivia contest that requires multiple answers (example: Tom Hanks Movie Titles). For fairness, I banned the use of Blackberries or iPhones for online cheating.

After the meal, I led some group games on the "dance" floor, starting with the balloon/union suit stuffer, then a scavenger hunt, a battle of the sexes improv game and a game where teams from different departments had to huddle up and then "Name That Movie" when given a popular quotation from it.

GENERATING WARMTH

By the time the 3:30 ending time rolled around, the room was still packed, but getting pretty cold. Since guests already had their coats on, the CEO thanked everyone and made the usual "drive carefully" announcement, then turned and extended his arm toward me (now behind the DJ table which was still filled with props, but no equipment). Before he said a word, the audience stood and started applauding. Even the human resources director who thought her employees wouldn't participate came up and said that it had been the "best holiday party we've ever had." Now I can say I did a complete four-hour gig where I didn't play one wrong song. **MB**

Michael Edwards is the owner of AllStar Entertainment, www.getadj.com, www.djlastminute.com and www.djbids.com. Full-time since 1979, Mike is one of 24 AllStar DJs at his agency in Andover, Massachusetts. A member of the Mobile Beat Advisory Board and the American Disc Jockey Association, Mike can be contacted at his office at 978-470-4700 or emailed at info@getadj.com.

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